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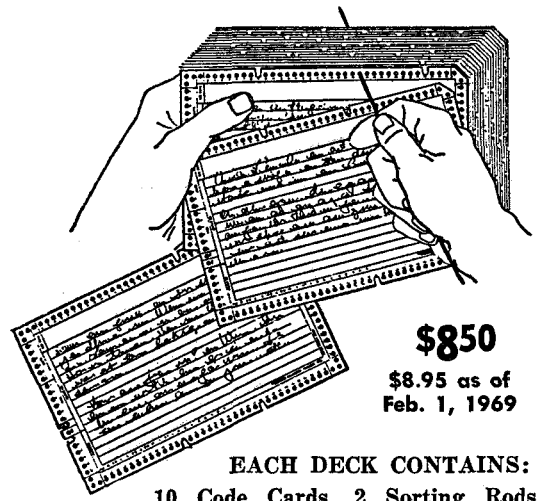

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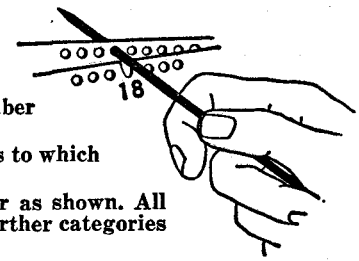

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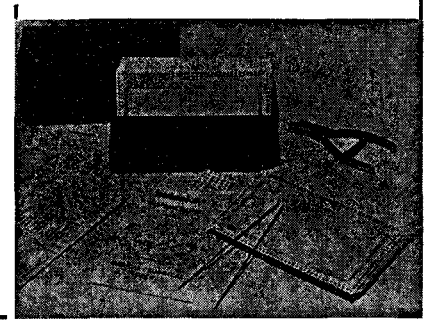

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If You Don't Mind My Saying So.....

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

The most dangerous enemy is usually within the gates. And that goes for religions, philosophies and societies as well as for cities.

Only biblical scholars knew enough about the Bible to undermine its authority. Upper-class intellectuals like Voltaire taught the dispossessed that they had as much right as the privileged to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Karl Marx was able to expose the evils of capitalism because he was supported by what he was bound to regard as the ill-gotten gains of his patron Friedrich Engels. Tolstoi, near the top of the aristocracy of birth and wealth, blasted the props from under the class to which he belonged. In our own day it was the grammarians who persuaded us that the idea of grammatical correctness is all nonsense and the educators (intellectuals—at least, theoretically) who taught us that education should not be intellectual.

Facts like these incline me to the belief that if the unbridled pretensions of science and technology are ever effectively questioned it will be because, within the ranks of science and technology itself, opposing voices have been raised. Scientists will have to assure us that science is not the only source of truth and wisdom. They will have to insist that it alone should not determine the future of mankind.

No one else has been (or seems likely to be) listened to by more than a few. But when a scientist like René Dubos publishes in the *Saturday Review* an article of which the theme is simply that science alone cannot be trusted to determine our future, then a great many will listen. The prestige of his position as a professor at the Rockefeller University, together with the fact that he is a biochemist and therefore on one of the most active frontiers of science, establishes the impressiveness of his challenge to just the pretensions that some who have no scientific competence have been attempting ineffectually to combat. Professor Dubos is an enemy within the gates.

The real achievements of science are so indisputable and so spectacular that those who devote themselves to it could well afford to abandon some of the claims they have been accustomed to make, and they might well begin by ceasing to attribute to the scientist (who is human, fallible and often prejudiced) the ideals, characteristics and virtues included in the abstract concept called Science.

When I hear it said that the conclusions of science are objectively verifiable and that therefore competent scientists, unlike competent philosophers or literary critics, necessarily accept one another's conclusions, I think of such notable examples of this necessary agreement as the expert opinions about atomic fallout publicly stated by Drs. Pauling and Teller, who, in actual fact, express diametrically opposing views concerning not only the moral issues but also the physical facts. Moreover, this disagreement, one cannot help suspecting, is the result of that very wishful thinking of which Science (but not the scientist) is incapable. Both Dr. Pauling and Dr. Teller, being opposite in temperament and therefore committed to

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political and social ideals that do not coincide, want what they proclaim a scientific fact to be true, but it is obvious that if one of them is unbiased, then the other cannot be.

When we are told that we should accept the general proposition that scientific opinion alone should determine law and policy, I am inclined to reply that if we could get that opinion from the theoretical horse's mouth known as Science, something might be said for the contention, but that, too often, we nonscientists have to decide which scientist to believe. As the old joke has it, figures can't lie, but liars sure can figure. And that might be rephrased to state something which is, alas, no joke. Science is objective and infallible, but scientists are not.

". . . Science is constantly, systematically and inexorably revisionary. Science, by the rules of the game, is a self-correcting process and one that is self-destroying of its own errors." So Walter Orr Roberts, director of the National Center for Atmospheric Research, wrote in the Spring, 1967, number of the SCHOLAR. This, of course, describes what science should be but it is not what all scientists are. If they were "inexorably revisionary and self-correcting," they would say of every theory they expound that this is what science at the moment believes but that, of course, it may be (and, if we may judge by experience, probably will be) reversed or at least modified in the future. But instead of this modesty, the more usual attitude is that this is what we must believe and that to doubt it is heresy—as happens, for example, to be the case with Nobel prizeman Francis Crick who, about the time when Dr. Roberts was describing the incorrigible tentativeness of science, was writing his book *Of Molecules and Men*. It is devoted to the thesis that there is no qualitative difference between living and nonliving matter, and in it, with what can hardly be described as admirable tentativeness, he proclaims concerning any contrary beliefs, "What everyone believed yesterday and you believe today only cranks will believe tomorrow"—a crank being, by definition, anyone who does not accept as beyond dispute one of those scientific theories that, according to Dr. Roberts, inexorably revisionary science always regards as tentative.

Scientists very often not only admit but boast of the revision or rejection of once universally held theories—provided only that they are in the far past and not likely to cast any doubt upon the unassailableness of the contrary theories that have replaced them. They tend, moreover, to brush under the carpet examples of revision that are embarrassing to present opinions because the once confidently held error is now a heretical doctrine that would bring excommunication from the scientific community upon anyone who dared to advance it.

I have read a good many expositions of Darwinism and I can remember only one in which it was indiscreetly pointed out that Darwin believed in the inheritance of acquired characteristics. This fact is, indeed, so generally passed over in silence that it has several times happened to me that when I mentioned it in the course of conversation I was flatly contradicted by people who prided themselves on their scientific knowledge and who assured me that, on the contrary, Darwin had destroyed this false prop to Lamarckism.

In its original form Darwinism rested upon this and two other assumptions now rejected by all the orthodox—namely, that the accumulation of small variations was alone responsible for the differentiation of species and that sexual selection was a crucial factor in accumulating them. Yet even when these errors are today admitted, they are not accepted as a reason for suggesting the bare possibility that some of the fundamental assumptions of neo-Darwinism may be someday revised. For polemic reasons Thomas Henry Huxley made himself an example of the authoritarian scientist. But, when not engaged in controversy, he was inclined to defend Darwinism as no more than the most valuable working principle of the moment and warned of something many present-day scientists might well remember, "It is the customary fate of new truths to begin as heresies and to end as superstitions."

Of Samuel Johnson it was said that if his

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pistol failed to go off he would knock you down with the butt end of it. Some scientists employ a similar technique. They close any argument with a "science has proved" and that declaration is not very different from the fundamentalist's "the Bible teaches"; from the Roman Catholic's "St. Thomas says"; the medieval scholar's "according to Aristotle"; or the Pythagorean's *"ipse dixit."*

That same Thomas Henry Huxley who was so well aware that new truths tend in time to become superstitions was himself the author of an *obiter dictum,* which, if not by now a superstition, is at least dubious wisdom. "Sit down before fact," he wrote, "follow it humbly and to whatever abysses nature leads." He was, I assume, thinking more of pure science than of technology, and when he referred to abysses he meant those supposed abysses of atheism and despair into which the opponents of Darwinism declared it would plunge humanity. But with every year it becomes more alarmingly evident that pure science does not remain pure and that, sometimes for good, sometimes for ill, technology seizes upon it to create new wonders or, sometimes, new horrors. Even the pure scientist is faced with the responsibility he sometimes refuses to assume.

A heretic scientist like Oppenheimer may confess to a conviction that, as a scientist, he has "known sin." The more usual attitude, sometimes implied and sometimes explicitly stated, is simply "I have no responsibility except the responsibility to discover as many facts as I can; those who use them are responsible for the consequences of such use." Edward Teller (referring like Oppenheimer to the creation of the bomb) wrote thus in the magazine *Science* (25 February 1955): ". . . I also believe that we would be unfaithful to the tradition of Western civilization if we were to shy away from exploring the limits of human achievement. It is our specific duty as scientists to explore and to explain. Beyond that our responsibilities cannot be any greater than those of any other citizen of our democratic society."

But within the ranks of scientists themselves there are those ready to join the humanists in protesting against such a washing of the hands. To say that the scientist is not responsible for the use made of his discovery is beginning to seem too much like saying that if you put poison and firearms where children can reach them it is not your fault if they kill themselves. As the technological possibilities created by scientific advance become more and more terrifying, it becomes at the same time increasingly clear that there is not enough human intelligence, foresight or good will to cope with the new dangers.

Henrik Ibsen's Dr. Stockman warned his conventional enemies that "truths grow old," which was another way of saying that heresies presently become superstitions. Even the ideals that at any given time we may quite properly cherish sometimes become under other conditions dangerous superstitions. When Huxley urged the scientific investigator to disregard all possible consequences in the search for scientific fact, technology was still, if not in its infancy, no more than adolescent. By now it has reached the point where what we need most is not more facts but more wise use of them. It is time to remember that science should exist to serve human beings, and not, as the more intoxicated disciples of this new god sometimes assume, human beings to serve science.

Art for art's sake is a doctrine not often defended today when even the pornographers plead social usefulness. But science for science's sake still has its defenders. Some scientists and the beatniks may seem poles apart but at moments they approach very closely. Consider this bit of dialogue from Jack Kerouac's *On the Road:*

"We've gotta keep going, man, and not stop till we get there."

"Where're we going, man?"

"I don't know but we gotta go."

If atomic fission was the most fateful and most ominous novelty of the first half of the twentieth century, the synthesis of DNA and the creation of a virus in a test tube (both announced during the closing weeks of 1967) will probably be the most fateful of the second half. Anticipating and confidently predicting these achievements a year

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in advance, Professor Robert Sinsheimer, professor of biophysics at the California Institute of Technology, said of our new power to intervene in the realm of heredity and personality: "We in science are growing up now. Our toys become more potent. The little games we play with nature have a great stake, and their outcome moves the whole social structure. We must accept our responsibility." Of this last admonition (and Dr. Teller notwithstanding) I find that no dignified comment can express my reaction so well as a colloquial, "Boy, you said a mouthful." Unaided nature is said to have led us from the protozoa to Homo sapiens. Whether man himself will do as well with us is an unanswered question with terrifying implications.

December Flight

MELVILLE CANE

Seat-belted,
Six miles high,
We're catapulted
Over Kansas, eastward,
Miles on miles.

Deep downward,
The swimming eye
Enfolds the acred fields,
Their August-wheatened
Geometric squares now whitened
Tiles.

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"The Body Makes the Minde"

STANLEY BURNSHAW

TO " 'LOOK INTO OUR HEARTS AND WRITE,' " says T. S. Eliot, "is not looking deep enough; Racine or Donne looked into a good deal more than the heart. One must look into the cerebral cortex, the nervous system, the digestive tracts."

Within his enclosing skin, each man is an interior sea. And, like the ocean itself, this invisible world contains "all of us that is *alive*"—the enormous multitudes of microcosmic living elements (cells) that compose our muscles, glands, brains, nerves and other structures. "All of us that is alive" are water inhabitants, inhabitants of a fluid matrix, and whenever danger of its loss arises, agencies within the body act swiftly to reduce the danger.

A century ago the French physiologist Claude Bernard declared that "the stability of the interior environment is the essential condition of free and independent life," for *"all the vital mechanisms,* however varied they may be, *have only one object: that of preserving constant the conditions of life in the interior environment."* No more pregnant sentence was ever framed by a physiologist, said Haldane. No more inspiriting enlargement of such a conception could be desired than that of Dr. Walter B. Cannon, whose thought and words make up the preceding paragraph.

Drawn from firsthand laboratory experiences, Cannon's *The Wisdom of the Body* often reads like a book of marvels:

> When we consider the extreme instability of our bodily structure . . . its persistence through many decades seems almost miraculous. The wonder increases when we realize that the system is open, engaging in free exchange with the outside world, and that the structure itself is not permanent but is being continuously built up again by processes of repair.

✪ STANLEY BURNSHAW is the author of *The Poem Itself* and of two books of verse, *Early and Late Testament* and *Caged in an Animal's Mind.* This article is part of a book, *The Seamless Web,* which Mr. Burnshaw is preparing for publication. The title, "The Body Makes the Minde," comes from John Donne's *Paradoxes and Problemes, XI.*

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The astonishing fact is that

> Organisms have somehow learned the methods of maintaining constancy and keeping steady in the presence of conditions which might reasonably be expected to prove profoundly disturbing.
>
> If changes threaten, indicators at once signal the danger, and corrective agencies promptly prevent the disturbance or restore the normal when it has been disturbed.
>
> The corrective agencies act, in the main, through a special portion of the nervous system which functions as a regulatory mechanism.

By storing and releasing material supplies, by altering the rate of continuous processes, by mobilizing natural defenses against injury —all within a very wide margin of safety—the normal human organism protects itself for decades against perturbations. The agency responsible for preserving this homeostasis, for protecting the cells in all their parts whether from within or from without, is the controlled fluid matrix (water modified by the addition of salt and thickened by an albuminous or colloid material).

To read through Cannon's volume is to discover not only unimagined complexities of the world within each man, woman and child but also specific ways in which it acts to maintain the balance essential for continuing existence—in Bernard's language, for "free and independent life." How, for example, it assures constancy of the water content in the blood; of the salt content; of the blood sugar; of the blood proteins; of an adequate supply of oxygen (which it cannot store as it can food and water). How, in the face of enormous variations both within and without, it achieves constant body temperature. In some organs, one is surprised to learn, the margin of safety drawn on in emergency situations can amount to five, ten, even fifteen times the quantity actually needed. Perhaps most impressive of all is the part played by the sympathetic division of the autonomic system, which goes about its work *independently of voluntary thought,* since every change in the outer world, in fact every considerable move in relation to the outer world, demands undelayed processes in our inner world.

At the very beginning of a disturbance, sentinels (automatic indicators) set the corrective processes into operation without otherwise being told to do so:

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If the blood pressure falls and the necessary oxygen supply is jeopardized, delicate nerve endings in carotid sinus send messages to the vasomotor centers and the pressure is raised. If by vigorous muscular movements blood is returned to the heart in great volume, so that cardiac action might be embarrassed and the circulation checked, again delicate nerve endings are affected and a call goes from the right auricle, that results in speeding up the heart rate and thereby hastening the blood flow. . .

All such processes go on by themselves—we are not even vaguely aware of most of them—for the good reason that the organism cannot afford to wait for voluntary decisions from the brain if it is to maintain the requisite stability in relation to both internal and external worlds. On the contrary, it is precisely what these processes do on their own initiative that frees the higher centers of the brain to go about their particular interests, in a quite different mode of "thought." If "higher" and "lower" as applied to thought structures denote only complexity and distance from the ground, a revision seems in order in our notions of human wisdom. As the last few paragraphs suggest, the bodily processes responsible for assuring the organism's security discharge their tasks through most remarkable modes of response. For swift and exact knowledge of when to begin, what to do, and when to stop, the cleverest brain would be hard put to match this lower body's wisdom.

> Numberless are the world's wonders, but none
> More wonderful than man

cries the chorus in the great ode of *Antigone,* celebrating man's highest thought "rapid as air," his "clear intelligence, force beyond measure." But among the wonders he possesses, what outrivals his unsung inner sea that guards the gift of his life?

No one can understand the organism's response to a disturbance without being impressed by a magisterial fact: both brain and "body" do whatever they can to dispose of it quickly—a thought, rarefied air, a bleeding blood vessel. The brain, when its rhythmical unison is broken by an upsetting idea, at once activates its resources so that it can return to its synchronous beating. The fluid matrix, when something disturbs its balance, moves its processes in the same direction of stability. To be thus peaceably at one

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with the worlds within and without is the guiding dream of the organism, the goal toward which it strives in all its parts and as a whole.

Because this ideal state of internal constancy cannot always be attained, the organism learns both to adapt itself and to maintain adaptedness against the pressures of ever-changing environments. Physiological and biochemical homeostasis do not, however, account for all the processes through which man's organism responds adaptively. The world is still ignorant of how these unknowns operate; perhaps it will never find out.

Meanwhile other "talents" have emerged that suggest how much more might be learned about human nature. One scientist brings evidence for a remarkable sensitivity of the skin even to speech. Another finds "a differential effect of colors" to be not limited to the eye but also holding for light stimulation of the skin in general, although to a much smaller degree (green and blue leading to a changed position of the arms in the direction opposite from that induced by yellow or red). A number of blind people under study accurately assess not only the distance of objects in their environment but also the size and the composition. Will a built-in sense of distance eventually prove to be latent in the sighted as well? What of the "eyeless vision" extensively studied by Soviet scholars?—of the reputed ability of one of their citizens to distinguish colors through her fingertips?—of the Michigan housewife with seemingly comparable skill? . . .

Enough unanticipated phenomena have been encountered to start what one psychologist calls "a renaissance of interest in the role of kinesic and paralinguistic information as it contributes to the total process of communication." Both studies—the first, of bodily movements relevant for transmitting information (such as gestures); the second, of vocal behaviors (such as tone of voice) having similar relevance—belong to the larger field of "semiotics," now being subjected to research. Not an hour of scientific training, however, is needed for identifying modes of "phatic" communication—those manifestations that convey information about a person's physiological or emotional state. As Weston La Barre remarks in *The Human Animal:*

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Many mere males have noted in bewilderment the acute phatic prescience of a mother when her child is concerned: she somehow knows when it is hungry and when it has had enough; when it is thirsty and when it is soiled; when it is tired, ill, or merely in a bad temper. Close emotional concern, endlessly repeated contexts, the infant's idiosyncrasies of expression, and the mother's own organic receptors all give her a large and continuing intelligence about the child. The phatic closeness of lovers also commonly reaches fantastic extremes of precision. . . . [T]he great social burden that even phatic verbalization still bears in humans is quite enormous.

The startling extent to which silent gestures and cues can replace verbal communication came to light sixty years ago when a German psychologist set out to explain the feats of Clever Hans, the famous horse belonging to a Mr. von Osten. Hans had apparently mastered the cardinal numbers from one to one hundred and the ordinals at least to ten, but this skill was the least of his accomplishments. He could also add, subtract, divide and multiply with integers and fractions. He could tell time to the minute, count the windows on distant houses, the number of street urchins climbing on the neighborhood roofs, and so on. He also had musical gifts, including absolute pitch and the ability to tell whether two tones simultaneously sounded made a third or a fifth. Hans had been trained by his owner to convert his replies into numbers and to tap them out with his foot, even when questions were written down on pieces of cardboard. An investigating committee of thirteen trained observers certified, after observing Hans in action, that the horse had not received any signs or cues from anyone. The conditions, in fact, precluded trickery.

One investigator, Oskar Pfungst, found not only that Hans was clever but that his performance did not depend on his trainer's presence since virtually anyone could ask him a question and very probably receive the correct response. But it was only after altering the conditions between questioner and horse that Pfungst could begin to see what was passing between them. A slight forward inclination of the questioner's head gave the signal for Hans to start tapping whether a question had been asked or not, and the rate of tapping seemed to depend on the angle of the questioner's head. When Hans reached the right number of taps, the questioner

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tended to straighten up, thereby providing Hans with the cue to stop. The horse proved sensitive to the most minute upward motions of the head—even a raising of eyebrows or a dilation of nostrils could stop him from tapping. Pfungst was able to demonstrate that anybody could start Hans's tapping and that anyone else could stop it merely by employing these cues.

The most unexpected among the findings came not from the response of the horse but from the behavior of the questioners. Even after he had thoroughly mastered the system, Pfungst discovered that despite his efforts to withhold them he was continuing to give signals to Hans. In order to verify his explanation of the horse's performances, Pfungst set up a new experiment. He took the part of Hans and invited other people to ask questions, to which Pfungst-as-Hans would now tap out the answers. Of the twenty-five questioners, twenty-three unintentionally gave cues. None had been told what was being investigated and one of them, a trained psychologist, was unable to discover how he was sending out signals.

A number of related experiments have been made, and although some failed to locate the precise elements in the communication system, all have been explained on the same theory: that subjects are able to perceive subtle nonverbal cues at levels ordinarily found to lie below the threshold. As Robert Rosenthal sums up the entire phenomenon (in a new edition of *Clever Hans*), Pfungst's findings as well as subsequent ones "may be interpreted to mean that not only does the experimenter unknowingly evoke expected responses from his subject but that the subject also unwittingly evokes appropriate cues from his experimenter."

The body not only can "speak" without depending on words or other sounds but its urge to communicate tends to be too powerful to be checked by the will. One body can "speak" to another body and be "heard" even when the speaker is deprived of his full expressive means, of voice and ear. What we have been watching here holds a new dimension of the involuntary processes. If the communicative behavior of the "exterior" organism points to more than the "interior" body wisdom adduced by Cannon, it is because of the difference in occasion. No threat to the body's integrity is

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involved. The insistence on communicating that underlies the behavior of the signaling "speaker" does not rise out of any immediate need for preserving his organism, although the need it fulfills may, in the long terms of creature survival, be just as great.

One cannot, in this general connection, help recalling what Pierre Janet remarked about human thought: that it "is not the function of any particular organ"; that "the brain is only a switchboard." The senses, to take only one set of structures, edit their messages before the latter reach the brain. The eye, for example, sees not points of light, for it is arranged to read the shape of things into what it sees. As J. Bronowski puts it, "the sense impressions do not come to the brain as blank signals, but as elaborately prearranged and biased messages." "A single nerve fiber . . . does not so much inform the brain as instruct it, by sorting its messages in advance . . . by judging for itself what is irrelevant and discarding it, without leave from the brain." Long before the investigations were undertaken that made this statement possible, Janet had declared that "we think as much with our hands as with our brains, we think with our stomachs, we think with everything." We cannot think otherwise, each of us being the organism that he is, carrying on a variety of behaviors for sustaining existence, many of which never reach into our level of awareness.

From what has been brought into view in the foregoing several pages, it is certain that much of the time we are being thought. Reflexivity is the only language we possess for suggesting the ways by which the organism and its environment maintain their existence without the aid of what we call a directing consciousness. Creature and world flow into each other on their own, without need of commands. Left to themselves, each gives and takes what it needs. And living as we do in dependence upon processes that guard and maintain our existence, we might well regard the relationship as a kind of mystical exchange; for this is the picture that the descriptions ultimately reveal. Much of the time, perhaps most, we are being lived.

"A man is born into the world with his own pair of eyes, and he is not at all responsible for his vision," wrote Stephen Crane,

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who then went on to burden him with responsibility "for the quality of his personal honesty." The extended implication—that everyone is "responsible" for what he makes of the capacities he was born with—seems unarguable. It is that, indeed, and imperatively more to British and American theorists, most of whom would dispense with all notions of the "innate." In contrast, their European colleagues cling to "genetic endowment." And they put forth powerful arguments for assuming (as one of them phrases it) that "certain mechanisms of behavior must themselves be refractory to any modificatory changes for the simple reason that they *do* contain the phylogenetic programming of learning processes." Not that they would disagree, for example, with the assumptions in Camus's remark that "After a certain age every man is responsible for his face." Their experiences, rather, compel them to insist that even before an entity of protoplasm first encounters society, its responses will have been predetermined to a significant degree.

I have not encountered any possible reason for doubting that the genetic uniqueness of every newborn organism makes for differences in response and *consequently* for differences in development—emotional, mental, physiological, whatever aspect be considered. This does not mean, however, that the organism can long continue to respond with the full capacities with which it was born; on the contrary, from the very beginning (in the womb) some are inhibited, others diminished, yet others lost in the natural courses of interaction with an environment that presses and modifies. Hence the organism comes to respond with the functional remnant of its original totality—the remnant made functional within the influences and accidents of all it encounters. Since for each person these are as unique as his genetic endowment when he enters the world, the nature of Crane's and Camus's "responsibility" changes: from a solidly based demand to an ethic conventionally fashioned of stern as-ifs.

Any composite of "a person" that is faithful must glow with elements conveniently ignored by our habit of making each "I" the master of all it was given. For the organism, participating in every action and reaction, working toward continuously stable interchange with its environments, and driving to dispose of whatever disrupts its balance, always proceeds *as an entirety* "on its

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own," regardless of what may be happening in the structure usually looked upon as its director. Which is to say, its brain, although "the brain" is itself composed of a number of structures some of which think by themselves (spinal cord, medulla oblongata, cerebellum, hypothalamus). Only in one small area, the six inches of the cerebral cortex, can be found the type of thinking we describe as voluntary—and this thinking, like every other event in the universe that is the person, is a bodily process.

How can such a material event be converted into an idea? Stimuli produce biochemical changes that give rise to nerve impulses that, in their turn, produce specific responses—so runs the current explanation. Although this general picture will possibly be replaced by another, we may remain sure that in normal human beings the sequence will always be the same as the outcome in thought will always differ. So each person, as he grows and learns and changes, makes his own ways of thinking out of the functional remnant of the capacities he was born with *and* out of all that his organism encounters. Or, if one prefers, each person is a unique constitutional entirety only some aspects of which become available for others to behold.

What, then, can be said of creativity? (The very question reflects what the biologist J. Z. Young remarked of the way each person organizes his brain. Westerners look at once for causal relations. Since it lies at the basis of our science and reason, we do not question causality itself, as others whose brains have been differently organized would do.) Like anyone else, a creative artist inhales the surrounding world and exhales it. Whatever is taken in is given back in altered condition or transformed into matter, action, feeling, thought. And in the case of creative persons, an additional exhalation: in the form of words or sounds or shapes capable of acting upon others with the force of an object alive in their surrounding worlds.

Such an object arises out of characteristic cycles of accumulation and release. At certain moments, words or sounds or shapes demand escape from the creative person. The organism becomes burdened. When it cannot find relief, it becomes literally overburdened. The interruption in the cycle produces an overaccumulation, a dysfunction of the organism, which manifests itself

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in a variety of states, from vague excitement or tension and irritability, to malaise, severe discomfort, even pain. (Frost speaks of "lovesickness"; Schiller, Eliot, of "burden"; Byron of "rage.") Persons other than artists may, of course, go through similar cycles, but with a poet the accumulation becomes associated and involved with a specific kind of verbal expression that affords relief. He may accumulate and release poems throughout his life; for a limited period or periods, regularly, irregularly; he may stop for years, then resume writing, or never resume writing. The pattern of any single poet has no significance within the total view of a unique psychophysical constitution that cannot maintain normal balance without discharging the burdens it accumulates periodically. The poet must get the disturbance out of his system to enable it to regain the requisite stability in relation to its surrounding world until the next disturbances accumulate and reach for release. This is his normal mode of functioning, for which he deserves neither credit nor blame. Within the mass of humanity, he belongs to the creature subtype which quite literally must ex-press that which builds up within. So it appears when viewed simply as animal behavior. Creativity consists of one more cyclic excretion of the organism, having nothing to do with aesthetic goodness or badness. It has only to do with constitutional need which discharges itself into what becomes a thing we call art.

Such an approach has the virtue of clearing the way for a new context in which to view creative "temperament" both with and without the eye of scientists. For while they keep repeating how little has been discovered of human thinking as detailed interreactions, they take for granted its involvement with individual biochemistry. And they are able to predict outcomes of interfering with normal biochemical arrangements. Meanwhile, some experiments with nonhuman animals have produced impressive responses as a consequence, in one instance, of altering the organism, and, in another, of altering the environment. Representative of the first is the work of James L. McGaugh with some of the various drugs that facilitate learning. For example, an optimal dosage of metrazol, when injected into the brains of mice, was shown to produce a forty percent improvement in learning ability. Not that specific effects were predictably the same; quite the con-

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trary, in some subjects, it altered "attentiveness," in others, the capacity to vary the attack on a problem; in still others, persistence, or immediate memory, or long-term memory. "Different drugs work differently for different strains, different individuals, different intellectual tasks, and different learning components"—the comment comes from David Krech. Taking what may seem a complementary approach, he and his colleagues have been studying the effects of "enriched" versus "impoverished" educational environments on the brain of the rat. In accordance with their expectations, not only did the cortex of the stimulated subjects (as compared with that of their fellows) expand and grow deeper and heavier but the postulated chemical changes also occurred, showing increased levels of activity in two enzymes.

What these experiments may signify for our view of creativity cannot, I think, be dismissed. And, surely, instead of consigning it to the dustbin of irrelevance, one does better to consider two resounding facts: that not a single rodent family has become extinct since the first appearance in Eocene times; and that the rat operates basically with the same methods that are used by man. In any event, the investigations make clear that whatever interference can achieve—from without (by the action of environment) or from within (by the action of drugs)—must depend on the constitution of the specific brain that is being stimulated. It depends, that is, on specific chemical status—on constitutional uniqueness. As to whether analogous changes in human thinking are possible, for answering this question we have at least hints—negative, positive and uncertain. We know, for example, when something obvious is lacking in the organism—when a child is born with a body that cannot produce a specific enzyme. Abnormal substances accumulate, mental deficiency follows. We also know when something obvious is added to the organism—when a substance is taken into the body that interferes with a specific enzyme. Abnormal substances accumulate, mental "magnification" follows. Finally, we know that the body itself can produce biochemical changes that lead the brain into abnormal-supernormal activity. In all three cases, the outcome depends on the specific chemical status of the person who is observed—and what does specific chemical status depend on but the "twofold matter" of genetic endowment and functional rem-

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nant of the original totality—the remnant made functional (as noted earlier) within the influence and actions of all it encounters?

One could say that this twofold matter "describes" the creative temperament if it did not equally describe every other kind. Its comprehensiveness, however, has worth, for it points to creative difference as one of degree that, in its largeness, distinguishes the artist as a type. His twofold matter has indeed developed into behaviors that set him apart—the cycle of burden and release, the ability-and-need to transform the world he inhales into objects that act upon others with strange forces of thought and feeling. What potentialities he began with at birth and how they were fostered as he grew remain unknowable, although it is easy to believe that the first in some measure forms a part of every human birthright. If in his case it was present in vastly greater amounts than in most others, then artists are surely born. If, however, in the course of his development, the extent and nature of the original capacity was shaped by what it experienced, then artists are surely made. In this view, all artists are born *and* made—and both, by the workings of chance, which re-covers these plain phenomena under the same sure mystery they had and will always have. Although some poets stumble on ways for releasing their creativeness, they cannot alter the fate that gave one more or less potentiality than another, as they cannot select for themselves the crucial early and subsequent influences that would foster best the gift they were born with. And to all these reasonings in terms of amount and extent, must be added that other unknowable that gives to the work of each authentic poet its cachet, setting Goethe apart from Hölderlin, Hardy from Eliot, Horace from Catullus.

Similarly, these reasonings say nothing of literary excellence or of why such a thing as creativity has had to evolve. But at this point the former would lead us away on a sidetrack and the latter would force us to write improbable volumes. We do better to question the passivity underlying the simplified explanations attempted in the paragraphs above. Nothing more need be said of endowment or intrauterine influence since both (as of now, at least) stand beyond reach. It is the seeming determinism of all that ensues that may be questioned. But if poets are very much made in the course of their experiences, this making involves the

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identical twofold direction that controls all other makings of the human organism—the ways in which we organize our brains, our habits, our gestures, our other selves. The verbs, whether active or passive, bespeak interreaction. Nevertheless, a very great part of all that is associated with creativity bears the certain mark of involuntariness. And the fact has been recognized for centuries by poets and others, some of whom have viewed it with acceptance mixed with desperation. In any event, as it responds to the forces surrounding it, the action characteristic of the creative self is a reflex. Although, as J. B. S. Haldane points out, "Reflex, drive, and purpose shade into one another in men," many writers emphasize the reflexivity of creative processes. "My thought thinks itself," says Mallarmé. "What a delight to drown one's gaze in the immensity of the sky and sea . . . all those things think through me, or I through them (for in the vastness of reverie, the I quickly loses itself)," says Baudelaire. "One no longer dreams, one is dreamed," says Henri Michaux eighty years later. Or, as we put it today, "I do not write, I am written."

"Who," then, "is doing the writing?" The question must in part be meaningless if "awareness" (which implies a directing agent) is, as many are convinced, no more than a construct of human brains: an assumption we have taught ourselves to make as part of the picture we compose of ourselves. Certain brain scientists tell us that the "reticular activating system [an arrangement of interconnected nerve cells in the brain stem] is the source of a special pattern of electrochemical nerve impulses that must be *received* by the brain if we are to be aware of what is going on." This system, then, can regulate degrees of awareness; but what regulates the system and determines its action? Apparently at the very moment when our attention is engaged by one phenomenon, a second will come along and seize our attention, making us far more aware of its presence than of the first. Why? Because, says Dean E. Wooldridge, "the appearance of an object of overriding interest generates a new electric signal that serves to turn down 'volume control' of the nerve system registering an object of lesser interest."

Change in awareness, it would seem, is something that *happens to the brain* as a result of change in stimulation. Attention, aware-

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ness, is "turned on, high" by something that commands one's attention by reason of its "overriding interest." The stimulus-object forces itself upon us, literally seizing our attention. Rather than that we can always select from a field of stimuli, certain among them impose their presence upon us and fill up our awareness. Objects, events in the surrounding world can speak to us and make us heed.

But is all awareness involuntary? The notion seems absurd: from our experience we feel convinced that at least much of the time we can willfully focus our thought and when attention wanders, bring it back and hold it there—perhaps even when something of greater interest appears. Chemists of the brain may be able in their terms to prove this false, but the brains we have created for ourselves think otherwise. And while we live, we proceed by the rules of our brains—as we must, being also their creatures.

As one of them, I have no difficulty in believing that I am being thought most of the time: that my attention is being directed; that only in between such moments do I find myself focusing my thought. For except at such an instant as this one, I do not think about how I think, nor stop to ask what is voluntary, what involuntary, or how the two processes shuttle back and forth. When I stop to behold what is occurring, I realize that they must, my organism being what and as it is. I know when, as a consequence of forcing, my brain has added up a column of figures and when, by no effort, it goes its own way in reverie. I know when my mind, deeply absorbed, has suddenly been pulled away by a flash of thought.

What kind of "I" is implied here? It obviously has nothing in common with the stereotyped notion of a directing agent in steady charge of all the activities of the organism and responsible for its action. On the contrary, much—perhaps most—of the time this thinking "I" is reflexive: how else account for what takes place when "I happen to think of an idea," when a thought "occurs to me," when a notion "comes into my head" as constantly happens? But even such an "I" may be unreal, only a manner of speaking—something we have taught ourselves to assume in order to be able to discuss ourselves. "We use the convention," says Young, "that placed in some way within us there is an agent who

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is said to act as we describe other men acting. This habit of postulating active creatures within bodies, the habit of animism," is directly traceable to the ways in which we have organized our brains—as indeed it must be—and for all its convenience in communicating, we might perhaps be better off without it. But, as Young says elsewhere:

> However much we learn later, we probably never lose the modes of receiving information and acting upon it that were appropriate to our earliest communications. When we were babies the human face was the all-important source of welfare, and all actions in the world around us came to be described according to it. Perhaps none of us can completely escape this fundamental source of animism because it is the way in which our brains must work.

There is obviously much more to be learned even of this limited facet of the subject and, by implication, vastly more than is considered even in *Brain and Conscious Experience,* the compendious record of a worldwide symposium held at the Pontificia Academia Scientiarum a few years ago. For consciousness involves "the one great philosophical question that embraces all others" —as Erwin Schrödinger says—the one that Plotinus expressed by his brief *Who are we?* But have we any right, asks another philosopher-scientist, "to expect a solution to such fundamental problems when the efforts made have been trivial relative to the extreme nature of the problem?" It is easy to forget that human impotence before baffling questions does not cancel out their existence.

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Rainy Christmas

ROBERT MORGAN

Wetting poplars, an east wind stuns through the valley.
Cornstalks move like spiders running, black mold
spreading on shredded leaves, crowtorn ears.
Grains with the hearts eaten out by rats freeze in mud,
noon a long twilight.

The house aims only its highest window intact,
dustsoaked curtains sweeping the cold floor,
rooms mined with junk.
The pool on the hearth is soot.

A gray wind hones eaves and sucks at windows,
mnemonic shudder in the hemlocks scratching where an owl sleeps.
Wind bodies out the rain and pushes it in spells
on the porch, forces a crow to leap against the air
and let it carry him down the cornfields
and headon into night.

✪ ROBERT MORGAN, a North Carolinian, has been a student of Fred Chappell and the late Jessie Rehder, and a recipient of a grant from the National Council on the Arts. His first book, *Zirconia Poems,* will be published soon by the Lillabulero Press.

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Charles Fourier: Prophet of Eupsychia

DANIEL BELL

THE MARK of the new cultural *avant-garde,* we are told, is the attack on repression. In the work of Herbert Marcuse, Norman O. Brown and R. D. Laing, a new trinity for a new left, the target is now, fully, modern civilization which is seen as restrictive and repressive. The enemy for all three is bourgeois society, which has distorted original human nature by its demands for delayed gratification, its insistence on heterosexual monogamy, and its specialized division of sexual labor in which all pleasure is restricted to the genital organs. The revolution that must come, they proclaim, must be not only political but sexual as well. For Marcuse, it will liberate Eros, ontologically defined; for Brown, it will reinstate polymorphous-perverse pleasures; for the British psychoanalyst Laing, following the French moralist Michel Foucault, it will erase the distinction between sanity and madness.

We have here, thus, a new recipe for *Eupsychia**—the psychological utopia of individual release far beyond the utopia of material plenty and freedom that nineteenth-century prophets (including Marx, himself a sexual prude, at least in public, although he sired an illegitimate son) had foretold for the future.

Despite its contemporaneity, the postmodern mood (for this is

* The term "eupsychia" is that of the neo-Freudian psychoanalyst A. H. Maslow, which has been used by Frank E. Manuel to designate a kind of utopian thinking oriented to the release of psychic impulses rather than to the restructuring of social arrangements. See Frank E. Manuel, "Toward a Psychological History of Utopias," in Manuel, ed., *Utopias and Utopian Thought* (Boston, 1966) and A. H. Maslow, "Eupsychia—The Good Society," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology,* 1 (1961), pp. 1-11.

© DANIEL BELL, professor of sociology at Columbia University, adapted this essay from his monograph on Charles Fourier and Albert Brisbane, which will introduce the John Harvard Library's reissue of Albert Brisbane's *Social Destiny of Man.* In this version, most of the footnotes and references have been omitted for reasons of space.

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the vision) inevitably has its forebears, none more curious, perhaps, than the utopian socialist Charles Fourier. If Henri de Saint-Simon, the compatriot with whom he is mistakenly linked, was the prophet of technocracy, then in the new cultural *Zeitgeist* Fourier may be considered the guru of the New Left. In the strong cultural reaction to technocratic modes of thought, with their emphasis on rationality and economizing techniques, there is today the resurgence of emphasis on feeling, sentiment, emotion, and the "natural man" who will live by sensation and impulse, unencumbered by restraint and denial. In this pantheon, the Marquis de Sade is the anti-Christ of the sexual revolution; by the same token, Charles Fourier may be considered its anti-Paul.

The Natural Man

François Marie Charles Fourier (the family name was originally Fourrier, but he preferred to spell it with one *r*, as he preferred to call himself Charles) was born in 1772 and died in 1837. He was one year younger than Robert Owen (1771-1858), and twelve years the junior of the Comte de Saint-Simon (1760-1825). Although both Owen and Saint-Simon clearly were men of the nineteenth century in their concerns with education and with industry, Fourier, just as clearly, was a throwback to the eighteenth century, and particularly to Rousseau. The ties between the two are extraordinarily strong, although Fourier makes little mention in his writing of Rousseau. For Fourier only Newton and Columbus (in the symbolic sense) were acknowledged as forebears.

"Civilization," writes Fourier, "is . . . a society contrary to nature, a reign of violence and cunning; and political science and morality, which have taken three thousand years to create this monstrosity, are sciences that are contrary to nature and worthy of profound contempt." Fourier, as J. L. Talmon observes, is conscious of reliving the experience of Rousseau, for he quotes approvingly the inflammatory sayings of the eighteenth-century prophet in the *Discourse on Inequality:*

Tout était bien, sortant des mains de l'auteur des choses; tout dégénéra entre les mains de l'homme. . . . Ce ne sont pas là les hommes, il y a quelque bouleversement dont nous ne savons pas pénétrer la cause.

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All has gone hopelessly wrong in the era of civilization, or rather civilization as such has been one tissue of evils. As Frank Manuel has written:

> The works of Fourier leveled the most circumstantial attack on the uses of civilization since Rousseau. What he lacked in style he made up in a profusion of detail. The cheats of ordinary commercial arrangements, the boredom of family life, the deceits of marriage, the hardships of the one-family farm, and the miseries of pauperism in the great cities, the evils of naked competition, the neglect of genius, the sufferings of children and old people, the wastefulness of economic crises and wars, added up to a total rejection of civilization as a human epoch.

As in Rousseau, and the romantic denouncers of civilization, the fraternal life for Fourier can take place only in small communities whose members would know each other personally. The village and the small town of the Middle Ages are compared favorably with the modern big city, in which the individual lives presumably in anonymous isolation. "No more capital cities, no more big cities," cries Buonarroti, Babeuf's comrade-in-arms and the historian of the "Conspiracy for Equality," the first pronunciamento of political communism in modern times. Large cities, echoes Fourier, are a symptom of public ill-health.

Yet it is not communal living alone that is the answer. After all, in the small town and village public opinion exercises full control over human behavior, and public opinion, operating through such regulatory techniques as shaming and gossip, can enforce as cruel a conformity as any regulated army. The true salvation of man, the only basis of happiness, is the complete release of the passions. Repression is responsible for the evils of civilization; the abolition of repression is the condition of the free expression of the personality.

The original error of mankind was not to taste of the fruit of sexual knowledge, but, contrary to the intentions of the Creator, to proclaim that the release of those passions was evil and sinful. Out of that repression, a double standard of morality was created in which men would secretly and shamefully search out their lust and yet publicly and piously denounce those impulses and its expressions. Marriage in contemporary society, Fourier wrote in the

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Théorie de l'unité universelle, is "pure brutality, a casual pairing off provoked by the domestic bond without any illusion of mind or heart."

Family life, the key social institution of the civilized state, was Fourier's most compelling example of an unnatural institution, holding men in its iron grip, bringing misery to all its members. All utopias promise freedom, but most of them are utilitarian, concerned with household arrangements, the organization of labor, and the sharing of goods; even where there is a full equality for women, monogamy is the usual, permissible social practice. Only the Marquis de Sade and Fourier, as Manuel observes in a study of French utopias, "would open wide the floodgates of promiscuous sexual encounters to those who desired them."

The claim may be exaggerated. In the utopia of the Marquis de Sade, which is described in *Aline et Valcour,* while the boys and girls of Tamoe, the mythical isle of the South Seas, are permitted to sleep with each other and to decide, after a week's trial, whether to become married or not, once married they are permitted only two divorces. In the *phalanstères* of Fourier, his *musée imaginaire,* free choice and free play of passion are emphasized, but he envisages a tie of "compound permanence" based on the constancies of complementary passional attractions. Yet it is true that the chief aim of both men is the enhancement of pleasure. Sumptuousness, voluptuousness, pleasures gastronomic and sensual—these were the fantasy visions that bubbled in Fourier's mind. The natural man of Rousseau had desired only "food, a female and rest." (What the "natural woman" wanted was unclear.) For Fourier, these three desires remained basic but their fulfillment would not take place just *en plein air* but in the heated rooms of the seraglio as well. To paraphrase the old remark of Terence, for Charles Fourier nothing passionate was alien to him—at least, in his dreams.

The Farrago of the Heavens

"Sent by Providence to deliver humanity from the bondage of incoherence." This was the self-intoxicated vision that Fourier himself had of his destiny on earth. *Moi seul* and *moi le premier*

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were recurrent motifs in his writing from the start. *"Moi seul j'aurai confondu vingt siècles d'imbécillité politique. . . ."*

I alone shall have confounded twenty centuries of political imbecility, and it is to me alone that present and future generations will owe the initiative of their boundless happiness. Before me, mankind lost several thousand years by fighting madly against Nature; I am the first who has bowed before her, by studying attraction, the organ of her decrees; she has deigned to smile upon the only mortal who has offered incense at her shrine; she has delivered up all her treasures to me. Possessor of the book of Fate, I come to dissipate political and moral darkness, and, upon the ruins of the uncertain sciences, I erect the theory of universal harmony: *Exegi monumentum aere perennius.*

To one who asked why this wisdom had not been vouchsafed before, why four hundred thousand volumes during twenty centuries of history had failed to disclose the secret of Providence, Fourier gave three reasons: false philosophers had previously obscured the significant meaning of God; the world (here he invoked the names of Columbus and Newton) had to await a new Messiah-Philosopher who would disclose the design of nature; and world history is divided into long periods of development and gestation, periods and phases, none of which could be bypassed. It was only now, in the conjuncture of History and the Man, that the time was ripe.

In the spirit of the Myth of Er, Fourier asserts that the history of the world encompasses eighty thousand years, forty thousand of them in ascending vibrations and forty thousand in descending vibrations. In all there are thirty-two periods, sixteen in the upward ladder and sixteen in the downward. In his time, the world was in the fifth of the first eight stages, having passed through what Fourier called the *Sectes Confuses, Sauvagerie, Patriarcat* and *Barbarie.* Ahead lies *Garantisme,* the realization of human rights, *Sociantisme,* or Association and beyond that *Harmonie;* and since human history so far has gone through only five thousand years, *Harmonie* would reign for another thirty-five thousand. "Thereafter," remarks Alexander Gray, "for eight thousand years we shall have that lofty table-land of perfect bliss, after which the world will go downhill again through precisely the same stages in the

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inverse order; and at the end, if any of us are left, we shall be transported to another planet."

Apart from the occult Pythagoreanism, the effort to escape from the "bondage of incoherence" often founders on Fourier's eccentric style, which is so difficult that at times it is impossible even to grasp the simplest meanings of his words. Frank Manuel writes:

> The works in which Fourier phrased and rephrased the system he had invented are full of neologisms, repetitions *ad nauseam,* and plain nonsense. There is an eccentric pagination, numerous digressions, and interpolations break the argument. . . . The neologisms are particularly irritating because they require interpretation, a guess at his meaning and are virtually untranslatable. Silberling's *Dictionnaire de sociologie phalanstérienne* is useful only to those who have already been initiated into the secret world. Fourier was conscious of the fact that he was pouring forth a torrent of newfangled words, and in his manuscripts he occasionally indulged in light self-mockery on this account. "Hola, another neologism! Haro on the guilty one! but is this any worse than doctrinaire?"

If, for Fourier, words were imperfect, music represented the "harmony of the spheres." As Albert Brisbane observed in the introduction to his 1876 translation of Fourier's *Theory of Social Organization,* "Fourier loved music," and the musical mode was the framework on which he draped his theory of social organization.

> Music is the distribution, classification, coordination and combination of sounds in a measured order. . . . Music is the only art that has been developed to a state of exactness. . . . Forms, colors, perfumes, flavors, etc. await the discovery by science of the theory of their harmonious combination. Vibration and sounds are the sole elements in Nature the means of harmonizing which man has discovered, and therefore it is that this art serves as a model of the harmonious organization of elements in other branches of creation. As such, Fourier prized it highly, and made use of it as an analogical guide in the study of the art of organization in general.

The function of music, according to Fourier, is to guide us to the hermetic mysteries, to reveal the esoteric elements of love and the sexual mysteries. According to Pythagorean tradition, however, the Master alone has the gift of actually hearing the music

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of the spheres, and so, from Fourier, we get only a glimpse, alas, through his cosmogony, of the future glories that await the human race. What are they?

The vision is a glorious farrago of the heavens. In this vision, when the human race will approach *Harmonie,* a Northern Crown (after the manner of Saturn's rings) will encircle the Pole, shedding an aromatic dew on the earth. Six moons of a new and superior quality will replace our present putrid satellite (which Fourier calls a *cadavre blafard*). The tides will change. The sea will cease to be salty and will be transformed into lemonade, a beverage for which Fourier seems to have a marked partiality.

The stars that rule our lives also have their passions, and from the copulation of the planets will spring not only other stars and planets but also plants and animals. A new race of animals, or anti-animals, will appear whose traits will be the opposite of their present ones. All harmful beasts will have disappeared and in their place will be animals that will assist man in his labors or even do his work for him. There will be anti-lions and anti-crocodiles, on whose backs we shall be able to travel huge distances in no time, and the anti-hen who in six months would lay enough eggs to pay off the English national debt. An anti-beaver will see to the fishing, an anti-whale will move sailing ships, an anti-hippopotamus will tow the riverboats. With no more than a few hours of daily work, men will be free to occupy themselves with play and with developing their intellectual, moral and artistic facilities to an extent hitherto unprecedented in history. But more, in this garden of delights men and women shall live for one hundred and forty-four years, and of these one hundred and twenty will be spent in the active exercise of love. This, then, is the vision of the natural man, in the fulfillment, for the first time, of his new and unnatural powers.

The Primacy of the Passions

What will put everything right, of course, is the release of the passions. The passions, says Fourier, are "the drives given us by nature prior to any reflection, persistent despite the opposition of reason, of duty, and of prejudice." At the core of Fourier's sys-

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tem, therefore, is the elaboration of the passions of man which, like the signs of the zodiac, the gods of Olympus, and the apostles, are twelve in number. Why twelve? Why not eleven or thirteen? Oddly enough, there was no explicit reason. According to Charles Gide, Fourier's sympathetic interpreter, the number twelve was chosen only because it made a better working number than eleven or thirteen. No matter. Since Fourier was deriving his scheme from a reading of God's intentions, if he picked the number twelve, there had to be a reason.

Inevitably, Fourier sees man's passions as eventually coming together—his simile is the trunk of a tree—in a *Unityisme*. But any tree has branches, and the passions are classed under three kinds. The first kind, five in number, are the sensuous passions, which Fourier calls "luxurious" because they give the pleasures of sensation: sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch. As Fourier remarks, "It is scarcely credible that after 3000 years of studies, men have not thought of classifying the senses. At present even our five senses are cited pell-mell; no distinction of rank is admitted among them." For Fourier, there is no equality among the senses. Taste and touch are the two superior ones, because they are active, while sight and hearing are passive, and smell is mixed. But as he says, most characteristically, taste "is the first and last enjoyment of man, it is almost the only resource of children and old men in matters of pleasure."

Next are the "group" passions, four in number, also called the affective passions because they derive from men's gregariousness. These consist of the desire for friendship (sometimes rendered as respect or honor), the drive of ambition, the need for love, and the repose of family. Men have always known these needs, although they have become cruelly distributed under civilization.

Finally come the three distributive or serial passions, the unique discovery of Fourier, that will flower only in the next, higher stages of society. These are men's passion for intrigue or discordance (which is labeled *cabalist*), the need for variety and change (which is called *butterfly*, or alternating), and the desire for concordance (which Fourier calls *composite*).

The three serial passions are the bases of Association, for only

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with their release can the sensory and affective passions come into full play. The cabalist is the love of intrigue and competition. In *Garantisme,* or the first stage of Association, groups will be set against groups in all types of contests to generate satisfactions. Intrigue will infuse added zest into routine jobs; it will turn work into mystery and play.

The cabalist is a favorite passion of women; they are excessively fond of intrigue, the rivalries and all the greater and lesser flights of cabal. It is a proof of their eminent fitness for the new social order, where cabals without number will be needed in every series, periodical schisms in order to maintain a movement of coming and going among the sectaries of the different groups.

There is something of the butterfly in all persons. But only the grubby caterpillar locks itself within the walls of the cocoon; the butterfly, from the first moment of its emergence, flits from flower to flower, using only "attraction" as its guide. Men do not want to be tied down to long hours, or to the drudgery of a single job. In the *phalanstère,* therefore, men will work at a single task only up to the period of maximum interest (about two hours) and then change to a different sort of job in order to revive their spirits and broaden their talents. And if consistency in vocation is undesirable, it is equally galling in sexual matters as well. If men should not be tied down to the drudgery of a single job, why should they be bound to a single woman? Men become stale and bored when chained by the bonds of matrimony. Consequently, in the higher forms of Association men will find their pleasure in the fulfillment of their butterfly nature in all ways of living: to be hunters in the morning, fishermen in the afternoons, and lovers of different women at night.

And finally, the twelfth of the passions—men will find their true being in the *composite,* in the combination of pleasures that are physical and spiritual. Any single pleasure alone degenerates into boredom; only in the composite is there that spontaneous enthusiasm "which is born only of the mingling of the two kinds of pleasure." The composite, says Fourier, "is the most beautiful of the twelve passions, the one which enhances the value of all the others. A love is not beautiful unless it is a composite love, com-

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bining the charm of the senses and the soul. It becomes trifling or deception if it limits itself to one of these springs. An ambition is not vehement unless it brings into play the two springs, glory and interest. It is then that it becomes capable of brilliant efforts."

These twelve passions, Fourier declares, are the design of God. They are psychological invariants since they are analogues of God's attributes. God, the "eternal geometer" of the passions, has created these dimensions of the human psyche just as he has created the immutable shades of color, the "perfectly ordered" science of music, the constant orbit of the planets and the dimensions of the physical world. But they have been distorted by men, particularly in civilization, which has introduced artificial distinctions in the allocation of fulfillments: under civilization, wealth alone allows the man who desires good food or good music to "luxuriate" his senses, while the familial passion, organized around a domineering and authoritarian father, exercises primacy at the expense of the other affections. Man's need to fulfill the totality of his passions is the expressed will of God, and since these are intrinsic to his nature, they must be afforded absolutely free expression.

But if anything goes, will not the willful and destructive urges that men have manifested for thirty centuries simply be given free reign, ending in a sanguinary saturnalia of sex and aggression? Was this not, after all, what the prophets of the Old Testament feared when they beheld the licentiousness of Sodom and Gomorrah, of Tyre and Sidon? For Fourier, however, it is passion that is good, and repression that is evil. From the debris of his manuscripts, his disciples found the following argument which was printed in Volume IX of *La Phalange:*

> Every passion that is suffocated produces its counterpassion, which is as malignant as the natural passion would have been benign. . . . Nero loved collective cruelties or their general application. Odin had made of them a religious system and de Sade a moral system. This taste for atrocities is nothing but a counterpassion, the effect of a suffocation of the passions.

Fourier's answer to the moralists is fairly clear. In the higher stages of society such impulses would either be drawn into appropriate channels or combined in a salutary way with complementary

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drives. Nero, for example, would at an early age have been attracted to work in the slaughterhouses. In the "natural" scheme of things, vice is a distortion of the passions, virtue their harmonious realization.

The rational and the passionate—these are the axes around which social thinkers have organized their conceptions of human nature since the dawn of philosophy. But which is to prevail if men are to be just and free? For the classical theorists, the answer was plain. The rational "truly taught and trained," as Plato puts it, must be "set over the desiring element, which of a truth makes up the greatest part of each man's soul, and is by nature insatiably covetous." Virtue is possible only when a man recognizes the proper limits of each part of the soul and accepts the principle "that the rational element must rule, and there is no rebellion against it."

Even Rousseau, although accepting the goodness of man in the primitive life, found that "the passage from the state of nature to the civil state produces in man a very remarkable change, by substituting in his conduct justice for instinct and by giving his actions the moral quality they previously lacked." If one recognizes that the "social contract" is not a description of the society of Rousseau's time, but a utopia to which men will move by the metaphysical imperative of the general will, Rousseau's words in defense of reason against passion become understandable.

> The voice of duty succeeds physical impulse and a sense of what is right the incitements of appetite. Man . . . learns to consult his reason before he listens to his inclinations . . . his faculties so unfold themselves by being exercised, his ideas are so extended, his sentiments so exalted, and his whole mind so enlarged and refined, that . . . he ought to bless without ceasing the happy moment that snatched him forever from [the state of nature] and transformed him from a stupid and ignorant animal to an intelligent being and a man.

But Fourier, more than any other radical, utopian thinker, builds his entire *social* system on the primacy of the passions. The Marquis de Sade had called for the absolute release of instinct in order to enthrone absolute freedom. But Sade had recognized acutely that, where all desires are permissible, in the ensuing con-

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flict of wills the world would end divided between the dominators —the masters or supermen who were entitled to their rule because of their recklessness, strength and courage—and the dominated—the bondsmen and the slaves who, fearing to risk their lives in the duel of wills, accepted servitude. Fourier, however, with his theory of the complementary nature of contradictory passions, believed that social harmony would result if all repression were lifted. For Fourier, the harmony of the released passions would be proven in the operations of the *phalanstères* that he had designed with such meticulous detail.

In the radical primacy of the passions, one encounters a strange "modernity" in Fourier and sees some strange descendents. As the sensibility of our time becomes increasingly intent on sensation and the erotic, it is in the writings of Paul Goodman and Herbert Marcuse, and other precentors of Eros that one finds, oddly roosting, the silkworm eggs of Charles Fourier. And, in psychology, Fourier has other, academic heirs as well. For in Fourier one finds not just a generalized emphasis on the passions, but the further, first effort to set up a *tableau psychologique,* a table of emotions that would map the permutations and combinations of the human passions, just as the physiocrats had set up a *tableau economique,* an input-output table to chart the flow patterns of economic exchange. And, even though in his megalomaniac excess Fourier eventually bursts the bounds of rationality,* one can still recognize, despite the madness, the validity of his effort to set forth a basic compass of human needs and a fundamental grid of personality prototypes, so as to have an adequate theory of human motivation within the broader context of a generalized theory of social action.

* Here, for example, is a basic table of the "affective" and "distributive" passions:

Ut Friendship	Violet	Addition	Circle	Iron
Mi Love	Blue	Division	Ellipse	Tin
Sol Paternity	Yellow	Subtraction	Parabola	Lead
Si Ambition	Red	Multiplication	Hyperbola	Copper
Re *Cabalist*	Indigo	Progression	Spiral	Silver
Fa *Alternating*	Green	Proportion	Quadratrix	Platinum
La *Composite*	Orange	Logarithms	Logarithmic	Gold
Ut UNITYISM	White	Powers	Cycloid	Mercury

(See "Of the Role of the Passions," *Selections from the Works of Fourier,* p. 57.)

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And finally, in his glimpse into that far-beyond future where anti-lions and anti-sharks are born, does not his vision of a third hermaphroditic sex, male and female combined, which would prove "with a beating of rods that men as well as women are made for its pleasure," foreshadow the contemporary prophets of polymorphous-perverse pleasures who proclaim a new resurrection of love's body? Is this not the final point when gratification, no longer specialized and delayed, achieves its fullest fantasy?

Childhood's End

For a man imbued, drenched with the idea of passion, Charles Fourier led the most extraordinarily narrow and crabbed life. A bachelor, odd and already set in old-maidish habits in his youth, he had no grand love affairs, or even any amorous relations at all with a woman. Compulsive in detail and obsessive in his habits, "his walking stick was regularly marked off in feet and inches, and everything remarkable which met his eye was instantly reduced to measurement and calculation." He was precise and exact in the arrangement of his life. "Today, Candlemas, I have written twenty thirty-sixths of my book," he recorded in a journal. He was completely self-absorbed. "In the three years of my association with Fourier," Albert Brisbane recalled, "I never saw him smile. . . . Any familiar conversation with him was out of the question. I saw him among his disciples; I saw him at dinner parties; I saw him at the society's celebration, but never did I see that concentrated expression of the face change. I recall vividly the impression this great reserve made upon me the first time I met him. . . ." A denizen of boarding houses, Fourier kept cats and parrots and tended flowers, breaking his fixed routines only to follow regiments of soldiers through the streets, keeping time to the sound of military music, spending long hours watching the soldiers drill "not from any warlike taste . . . but from a love of uniforms, plumes [and] evolutions conducted scientifically." Like children or old people, writes J. L. Talmon, "he took delight in assembling, arranging, and rearranging bits and pieces of all kinds of formations, full of symmetry and ingenious balance."

If a biography is a record of the meaningful *events* in a man's

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life, one could cover the task in saying that Charles Fourier was born in Besançon on April 7, 1772, and died in Paris on October 7, 1837. A character fit for the theater of the absurd, Fourier lived his life entirely in the mind.

Where there are no dramatic episodes or actions, hagiography must content itself with anecdote. And the disciples of Fourier recorded these in fair number. Charles Fourier was the only son of a woolen draper, the youngest of four children. When he was five years old ("we have heard him state," remarks a disciple Hugh Doherty), he conceived an implacable hatred against falsehood when his father punished him for telling the truth to a customer about the actual cost of a piece of goods. At an early age, too, he developed the tendency, as Brisbane puts it, to "mental analysis." Fourier, it appears, accompanied his mother regularly to the confessional,

> and becoming thus initiated into the character of this rite, he began, then, at the age of seven or eight, to ponder over the subject very seriously. The result was that he drew up a list of all the sins known to the Church, so far as he could collect them, and thus provided repaired alone to the Confessional, where he began a recitation of the whole list. The priest listened attentively for a few minutes, and then, with a jocose reprimand, asked him what he was thinking of. Fourier answered that he wished to make a confession in which no sin should be overlooked. His idea being, that if he took in the whole category, he would secure an integral absolution. This list of sins is now a relic of curiosity. It is written in a clear, firm hand, and the regularity and completeness of the analysis are very remarkable. In it we see a foreshadow of the future analytic tables, distributed through the works of the great thinker.

Fourier, like his father, was doomed to be a merchant, and, like him, not a very successful one. In 1793, at the age of twenty-one, he received about a hundred thousand francs, a sizable sum in those days, as his share of the property left by his father. With this sum, he went into business in Lyons as a merchant and importer. But the raw materials and spices he had purchased at Marseilles were not long in his possession when the city of Lyons rose in arms against the French revolutionary government. Fourier's bales of

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cotton were taken, along with those of other merchants, to erect barricades, while his rice, sugar and coffee were seized and distributed among the sick and the soldiers. In less than a year, he lost everything he possessed in the world. He almost lost his life as well. Pressed into armed service during the siege of Lyons, he narrowly escaped death during one militia charge against the government cavalry. When the Jacobin revolutionary agents entered the city, Fourier was imprisoned and escaped death a second time by telling the lie ("three different times in one day") that he was not a merchant but had been forced into the city militia against his will. ("Notwithstanding his horror of falsehood and lying, he had never felt the slightest remorse for having made that exception to the heavenly laws of truth," writes the admiring Doherty.)

Following two years of service in an Army cavalry unit on the Rhine and the Moselle, Fourier was discharged in 1795 because of ill health, and became a clerk in a commercial house. One further incident related by his biographers completes the tale of Fourier's recoil from society. In 1799, while employed in a wholesale warehouse, he discovered that his firm had secretly been storing large quantities of rice in the hope of reaping a large profit during a near famine at the time. When the stocks began to rot, Fourier was ordered to go with a number of stevedores and secretly throw the spoiled rice into the sea. The hagiographic embellishment was quickly added to the story:

> He thenceforth resolved upon studying incessantly until he had discovered . . . the means of permanently and effectually preventing . . . [such crimes against humanity]. This *holy* resolution . . . was crowned with success before the end of the year. In 1799 [the same year], Fourier discovered the universal laws of attraction and the essential destiny of humanity upon earth.

From that first *éclaircissement* to his death thirty-eight years later, Fourier devoted himself to the exposition, elaboration, reiteration, and greater elaboration of the Newtonian "psychophysics" which was the root of his system. To be confined constantly in a warehouse or countinghouse now seemed intolerable, and Fourier became what in France is called a *courtier marron*—an unlicensed commercial agent—while pursuing his studies and

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working out the increasingly complicated numerology (mathematics would be too rational a word) of his computations.

In 1808, Fourier published his first work, the *Théorie des Quatre Mouvements,* a book of about four hundred pages, which set forth the theory of universal attraction and repulsion. But as Doherty wrote:

> The first volume was merely a prospectus of the work, intended to procure the means of publishing the rest by subscription; but little or no notice being taken of the prospectus, the publication was suspended. He had bestowed eight years' labour in working out the principles of his discovery, before he attempted to publish them; and having discovered that certain parts of his theory were still incomplete when he published the first volume, he resolved to withdraw it from circulation, and continue his studies.

It was another fourteen years before a second volume by Fourier appeared. In 1814, he came into a small legacy of forty pounds a year when his mother died, and he retired to Belley, where one of his sisters lived, to continue his work. He was almost ready to publish his book in 1819 but delayed it, we are told, because of a new discovery he had made in the field of cosmogony, which took him a few years to verify. Three years later, in 1822, the first two volumes "of his great work on universal unity" were published under the modest title *A Treatise on Domestic and Agricultural Association.* Fourier went to Paris in the hope of having them favorably reviewed and to find the necessary funds for realizing the practical part of the system. He waited in vain for a year, realizing finally that bribery was the only means of obtaining notice in journals and reviews. His funds exhausted, his book ignored, Fourier left Paris, but the lure of the capital, unhealthy city that it be, proved too great, and he returned to take a job as a correspondence clerk in a commercial house for five years without, as his biographer writes, "obtaining any serious review of his work or making himself known to any influential person."

In 1829, on the advice of friends, Fourier published a one-volume abridgement of his treatise, with a title that was the obverse of the earlier one—*The New Industrial and Societary World.* But again the work attracted no notice, although Fourier sent it

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to everybody he thought likely to be interested in the ideas. It was only toward the end of his mean life that Fourier began to receive any attention. In 1832 the Saint-Simonians had attracted a large following by the creation of a new religious cult, but the factionalism inherent in any such effort, following the death of its prophet, soon led to schism. Some of the disillusioned acolytes found a new prophet in Fourier and started a journal, bridging the two creeds, called *Le Phalanstère, ou La Réforme Industrielle.* Other efforts followed. A joint-stock company was formed to carry out the theory of association, and a new follower of Fourier, Baudet Dulary, a member of parliament for the nearby Paris district of Seine-et-Oise, bought an estate near Rambouillet, for five hundred thousand francs, to put the theory into practice. But the theory proved too demanding, and the practice failed.

All his life, Fourier maintained a childish faith in some powerful benefactor or providential intervention that would transform the world for him. He looked for a capitalist to launch his first phalanx and he kept a list of four thousand "candidates" who might be persuaded to save humanity. In 1817 he wrote to the Russian Czar offering him the tetrarchate of the world and promising that the climate of Russia would become as pleasant as Italy's, if Fourier's system were instituted; but the Czar did not answer. Fourier wrote to the Rothschilds, offering the Kingdom of Jerusalem; but they rejected him as a false messiah. There was, at one point, a glimmering hope. In 1830, he was introduced to the Baron Capella, minister of the French Crown for the Department of Public Works, who promised to study his proposals, but on July 24th the Baron wrote Fourier regretting that he was obliged to suspend the examination of his system because of the extraordinary press of state business. The next day the July Revolution deposed the regime and Fourier was again reduced, as Doherty writes, "to the necessity of seeking for the means of realisation amongst skeptical, indifferent and even ignorant strangers." Every day, for the remainder of his life, according to the story told by his acolytes, Fourier returned home at exactly twelve noon to await a possible patron; but none came.

In the early part of 1837, Fourier met with a serious accident

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from which he never thoroughly recovered. One dark night, he missed his footing on the staircase leading to his rooms and fell two flights, fracturing his skull. Having no confidence in medical science, he refused all medical aid even though his face swelled and his stomach refused to function. Nor would he allow anyone to attend him, except an old woman who cleaned his rooms. One morning, two months after the accident, she found him kneeling at the bedside, dead.

Charles Fourier was buried on October 11, 1837, in the cemetery of Montmartre. On his tomb were engraved the three fundamental axioms of his doctrine:

1. *La Série distribue les Harmonies.*
2. *Les Attractions sont proportionnelles aux Destinées.*
3. *Analogie Universelle.*

The third axiom, however, is represented not by words but, faithful to the hermetics of the system, by his own mathematical notation.

In his writings one can see Fourier's deep and permanent longing for the eternal childhood of man which so many poets and Arcadians have celebrated. He resists relentlessly the expulsion from Eden and childhood's end. In Corinthians, Paul had put away childish things and seen through a glass darkly, but this "anti-Paul," with tinkling cymbals and a sounding brass, preached a new orgiastic chiliasm, the release of all restraints, the recurrent pleasures of childhood on earth. And this is the recurrent and permanent appeal of Charles Fourier.

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The Apocalypse of Norman O. Brown

RICHARD W. NOLAND

IT IS SIGNIFICANT that Norman O. Brown should begin his apocalypse on a religious note. "Inheriting from the Protestant tradition a conscience which insisted that intellectual work should be directed toward the relief of man's estate," he says at the beginning of *Life Against Death* (1959), "I, like so many of my generation, lived through the superannuation of the political categories which informed liberal thought and action in the 1930's." Like any good Protestant, Brown seeks to return to a lost primitive truth by reexamining "classic assumptions about the nature of politics and about the political character of human nature." The result of this reexamination is *Life Against Death,* "Apocalypse: The Place of Mystery in the Life of the Mind" (*Harper's,* May, 1961), and *Love's Body* (1966).

In *Life Against Death,* Brown appears in the role of psychoanalytic theoretician, philosopher of history, aesthetician, social critic and theorist, moral philosopher, and prophet. But in "Apocalypse" and *Love's Body,* he is mainly the prophet, whose message is a call to repentance and a way to salvation. As prophecy, Brown's work is apocalyptic. It begins with a sense of despair, a sense of the meaninglessness of contemporary history, and a belief that the present order must be destroyed and replaced by a new man and a new community. "History," he says in *Life Against Death,* "has brought mankind to that pinnacle on which the total obliteration of mankind is at last a practical possibility. At this moment of history the friends of the life instinct must warn that the victory of death is by no means impossible; the malignant death instinct can unleash those hydrogen bombs." "The Western consciousness," he says in "Apocalypse," "has always asked for

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freedom: the human mind was born free, or at any rate born to be free, but everywhere it is in chains; and now at the end of its tether." For Brown, then, the survival of mankind hangs in the balance. And, with the Western mind at the end of its tether, with all the categories of religious and political liberalism exhausted, only a desperate and radical remedy offers any hope of new and continuing life.

Brown's search for such a remedy begins with Freud—not Freud the scientist, but Freud the poet and mystic; not Freud the heir of the Enlightenment but a politically radical, Romantic Freud, whose thought, if correctly interpreted, contains a hidden apocalyptic intent. On this Freud, Brown bases the diagnosis and prescription of his own position. The diagnosis is one of universal human neurosis as a result of repression. The prescription is the total abolition of repression. What is repressed is very simple: it is the body, with its insatiable desire for instinctual gratification. To abolish repression, then, means to affirm the instinctual drives of the body. "All Freud's work," Brown says, "demonstrates that the allegiance of the human psyche to the pleasure-principle is indestructible and that the path of instinctual renunciation is the path of sickness and self-destruction." Man must destroy his Apollonian ego, the ego of form, reason and civilization, and create a Dionysian or body ego, "which stays in life, which is the body, and seeks to transform it." The result is to be a new man. Genital man is to become polymorphously perverse man, the man of love's body, able to experience the world with a fully erotic body in an activity that is the equivalent of the play of childhood.

This, Brown insists, is the real meaning of the Christian idea of the resurrection of the body. This resurrection, he says in *Love's Body,* is not simply to be the resurrection of the body of the individual "but the body of mankind. The fall of man is the fall into division of the human race, the dismemberment of the first man, Adam; and the resurrection or rebirth through the second man, Christ, is to reconstitute the lost unity." Unity is to be both political and religious: "There is only one political problem in the world today: the unification of mankind. The Internationale shall be the human race. That they may be one. . . . This is Christ's

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last prayer before the crucifixion. . . ." Thus, in *Love's Body,* Brown adds a Dionysian Christ to the utopian Freud and the humanistic Marx of *Life Against Death*—the three essential elements, in his view, for achieving even a glimpse of the life of the unrepressed and unified body of mankind.

In part, then, Brown simply continues that attempt begun by the Romantics to heal the split between the subjective and the objective, the self and the world, the conscious and the unconscious. Like many of the Romantics, he offers an alternative to the abstract, manipulative, quantifying rationality that is supposedly a legacy of the Enlightenment and that dominates, to the exclusion of all other human values and possibilities, the individual and collective mind of modern Western man. There is a morbidity in modern science, he says, and this morbidity consists of "the unconscious schemata governing the pursuit of knowledge in modern civilization—specifically the aim of possession or mastery over objects, and the principle of economizing in the means. . . . And the morbidity imputed to these schemata . . . amounts to this: possessive mastery over nature and rigorously economical thinking are partial impulses in the human being (the human body) which in modern civilization have become tyrant organizers of the whole of human life; abstraction from the reality of the whole body and substitution of the abstracted impulse for the whole reality are inherent in *Homo economicus.*" As an alternative, Brown offers his vision of the concrete, exuberant body of polymorphous man.

But Brown does not wish to stop with a new balance between reason and instinct. For him, the antagonism between culture and instinct, between pleasure-principle and reality-principle, is total. Culture and history, like each man who participates in them, are neurotic, since they are a product of repression, anxiety, and the conflict between life and death instincts. A reconciliation between reality-principle and pleasure-principle is thus unacceptable and inadequate. For it can lead only to further repression or, at best, to the partial abolition of repression, to the removal of what Herbert Marcuse in *Eros and Civilization* calls surplus-repression. It can lead, in short, only to normality, and normality, as Brown says

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in *Love's Body,* not schizophrenia, is "split-minded," for in schizophrenia false boundaries between inner and outer reality are disappearing. Man's destiny, he says in *Life Against Death,* is "to change reality until it conforms to the pleasure-principle. . . ." So, in Brown's view, it is really the subjective and the unconscious, not the objective and the conscious, that matter. The unconscious self is, of course, Dionysian man.

It would seem, then, that Brown has come up with his own version of partiality and abstraction. He is against such an abstraction as *Homo economicus.* Yet what could be more abstract than his Dionysian body, self-sufficient in its narcissistic and polymorphous ecstasy? He is opposed to the tyranny of partial impulses in man when they are used to organize the whole of human life. Yet for the partiality of *Homo economicus* he substitutes the partiality of complete instinctual gratification. He repudiates knowledge as a way of gaining possession or mastery over nature. Yet he defines man's destiny as the changing of reality to conform to the pleasure-principle. Is not this a kind of possession or mastery? At this point, it is almost possible to classify Brown and then dismiss him. For he illustrates perfectly Raymond Williams' description in *Modern Tragedy* of the historical collapse of the Romantic critique of the abstract rationalism of the Enlightenment into an "alienation of the irrational, which has become complete only in our century."

But Brown is not solely an irrationalist critic of Western rationalism. His real concern is mystical and religious. And what he seeks is nothing less than the abolition of original sin and the restoration of man's prelapsarian innocence. He wants to destroy the old Adam so that a new Adam may emerge. But for Brown this transformation of man must occur on earth, not in heaven. Brown is thoroughly naturalistic. His mysticism is this-worldly, a mysticism of the body. His theology is what it should be for any good liberal Protestant—a translation of orthodox ideas into terms intellectually acceptable to his own century. The fall of man is thus a fall from unity, not the result of disobedience. Original sin is repression, which can and must be totally abolished. Eternal life is the result of a breakthrough to the timeless world of the

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unconscious. And the resurrection of the body is the literal resurrection of the erotic capacities of the human body. Like the orthodox Christian, Brown sees man as the real obstacle to individual and social perfection. Unlike the orthodox Christian, he believes that there is a way for man to reverse the fall, to end history and culture, and to establish the kingdom of God on earth.

Brown bases his hope for a radical transformation of man, for the overcoming of original sin, on his interpretation of Freud. From Freud, he argues, we learn that repression is a purely internal process. The true sequence is from self-repression to social repression, not from social repression to self-repression. This self-repression, in turn, is a result of that anxiety that accompanies the prolonged and helplessly dependent infancy of the human species. Anxiety leads to instinctual repression and so to a loss of man's original instinctual unity. Life and death instincts now appear, at war with each other, forcing man into the individual and collective neuroses of history and culture. This is the process that Brown wants to transcend. But, as he knows, if Freud is right that life and death instincts are biologically rooted, then such a transcendence is impossible. If, on the other hand, life and death instincts are only an expression of human psychology, then it is possible. For this psychological dualism is not then a law of nature, and man is left with the possibility of achieving a new instinctual unity at a higher level of being. This he is to do by affirming, for the first time, his true nature, which for Brown is completely instinctual and unconscious. To make the unconscious conscious is to restore the primal unity, the one body, from which the fragmented and individual ego of historical man emerged. Then, says Brown, there would be only "one sea of energy or instinct; embracing all mankind, without distinction of race, language, or culture; and embracing all the generations of Adam, past, present, and future, in one phylogenetic heritage; in one mystical or symbolical body."

In Brown's view, then, the kingdom of God can be established only by a radical transformation of man, not by a change of environment. Brown insists that the external be adjusted to the internal, not the internal to the external. He is utopian, but he

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would not accept the rational and scientific utopianism that seeks a stable, ordered and efficient society through the manipulation of man, society and nature. A manipulated and conditioned virtue, after all, would only express and perpetuate the psychology of aggressive mastery over other men and nature that Brown wants to abolish. Brown speaks for man's unconscious needs and life, which a purely environmental utopianism so easily forgets or ignores. As Frederick C. Crews says, he "reminds us vividly of the unconscious life that is stepped on and twisted but never quite killed by the aggressive technological mentality now reigning" (*Partisan Review,* Spring, 1967).

But Brown's utopianism has its own problems and excesses. One seems driven to conclude, says George Kateb in *Utopia and Its Enemies,* "that the utopian imagination either depends too heavily on reality or severs itself too completely from it." In his commitment to the pleasure-principle against the reality-principle, Brown does indeed sever himself from external reality. At this point, however, it is probably no longer accurate to talk of him as a utopian who pays too little attention to the reality-principle. Brown offers no new psychosocial identity to replace the old one. We must, he says, "look to the end. The Christian prayer is for the end of the world: that it may come quickly. The aim is to bring this world to an end; the only question is how. A mistake here might prove quite costly." Brown is thus not interested in the exact details of individual and social identity, which, as Erik H. Erikson says in *Identity: Youth and Crisis,* "is necessary as the anchoring of man's transient existence in the here and the now." Hence Brown's repudiation of ego psychology as an important development in psychoanalysis. Brown is interested only in the abolition of history and culture and in discovering the right way to bring about the end of the world.

Brown's doctrine, then, is neither Christian nor humanist. It is Gnostic. For Brown, as for the Gnostics, the created world is imperfect and evil—in Brown's language, it is under the dominion of the death instinct. For the Gnostic, liberation was possible only by a detachment from the created world, a dissolution of the self of history and culture that would restore man to his primal

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innocence and so leave him free to become one again with God. For Brown, liberation is the abolition of repression and the resurrection of the primal unity of unfallen mankind. Gnostic mysticism, however, is typically otherworldly, and such a mysticism is, for Brown, escapist. It is "Apollonian or sublimation mysticism," as opposed to his own Dionysian or body mysticism. But if man is to dissolve his psychosocial identity, and if the aim of this dissolution is not a mystical union with pure spirit, what is the goal of Brown's this-worldly mysticism, of his intuitive vision of mankind's resurrected body? The answer, presumably, is the Dionysian ecstasy of polymorphous man. But, given Brown's commitment to an absolute, final, collective solution to the human condition, how is it possible to achieve finality of any kind if life is to continue on earth?

Nothing in Brown's argument answers this crucial question. Even if the dualism of life and death instincts is psychological rather than biological, is the anxiety that results from the long period of dependence of child on parent therefore either less basic to human experience or more easily eradicable? And even if one whole generation of mankind were to attain the Dionysian ego, would the members of this generation necessarily be able to transmit it to their offspring? If children are born, they must experience the anxiety common to all dependent children. This new generation must then repeat again the success or failure of its Dionysian parents. But, Brown argues, so long as there is Oedipal conflict, there will be the legacy of a "radical deformation of the human ego and the human body." To perpetuate such deformity is to prevent or retard the creation of a Dionysian ego. The family, obviously, must go the way of history and culture.

But what of children, whose very existence makes what was to have been a final solution no longer final? Here, Brown is suggestive rather than fully clear. But what he suggests is nothing less than racial suicide. For if polymorphous perversity is not simply a normal bisexuality, if true polymorphous play is forepleasure rather than coition, if pure Dionysian ecstasy is free of genital organization, then Brown is ultimately proposing the end of reproduction—a very minor step, in any case, since unrepressed

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man needs heirs no more than he does culture. On this point, a comparison between Brown and D. H. Lawrence is revealing. For Lawrence, the resurrection of the body was to lead to a oneness with life in which there was still a place for wife, children, friends and work. For Brown, Lawrence is a "paradoxically conservative philosopher of sexuality," who offers only an idealized genital character as a solution to the human neurosis. And this is neither radical nor final enough. Brown is at least consistent with the logic of his own radical need for finality. Once man has destroyed his psychosocial identity, he will then be ready to leap in a state of polymorphous ecstasy, not into pure spirit, not into a vitally renewed life of ordinary human activity, but into death. As Crews says, "With *Love's Body* Brown abandons his questionable role as historian and gives himself over to the ingenious nihilism that was lodged between the lines of *Life Against Death*. He eliminates our problems by eliminating us."

Brown is thus a nihilist in the only terms that matter in a period when there is no authoritative standard by which to judge —the terms of his own position. His road of excess leads, not to wisdom, but to death—if not to literal death, then at least to the death of man's human as opposed to his purely animal existence. For Descartes (in Brown's view, a villain of Western philosophy) the genuinely human is marked by a creative use of language and by diversity of action—both of which Brown would abolish. Brown cannot accept the historical and cultural imperfection of fallen man. Descartes sees perfection as a condition proper to animals, not to man. But whatever the goal—literal death, a prehuman animal life, or the polymorphous ecstasy of the infant —Brown's call for the total abolition of repression is also a call for the abolition of man.

In *The Sense of an Ending,* Frank Kermode describes two kinds of modernism—the authoritarian traditionalist and the hipster anarchist. Both, he says, respond to a sense of cultural decadence and transition, but the traditionalist uses the past while the anarchist, who is nihilistic and schismatic, simply destroys it. Brown is obviously a hipster anarchist, and his work, according to Leslie Fiedler (*Partisan Review,* Fall, 1965), is the fullest theo-

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retical statement so far made of the aspirations of a whole generation in revolt against the past—especially that past as represented by humanism and the cult of reason. Crews thinks that Brown's appeal rests on his anti-intellectualism, since his vogue "appears to coincide with a suspicion among many literate people that man's cultural ideals have always been illusory, and hence that the accumulated bloodshed of history has been a farcical waste." Fiedler and Crews may be right as to the nature of Brown's appeal, although the extent and depth of this appeal are far from clear. Is he read and followed seriously, or is he simply the object of a very temporary interest? In any case, his work has an obvious connection with that attempt that began during the fifties and continues into the sixties to return to the spontaneous, the instinctual, and the irrational. Brown is obviously not alone in his anti-intellectualism, and his own work undoubtedly contributes to the cultural situation in which it originates.

In *The Reforming of General Education,* Daniel Bell sees Brown's work as a part of a profound contemporary nihilism which is "embattled against the technocratic society." "The basic tradition of modern society," Bell says, "from Protestantism through Marx, was one of active striving to conquer nature, and to assert man's primacy and control over the material world. It is this activity principle . . . which is being repudiated as a cultural mode." But Brown repudiates much more than the activity principle of Western culture. His work reveals more than a failure of nerve or will as measured by the Western commitment to physical, moral and intellectual activity. It reveals a profound despair as to the value of life itself. One of Brown's claims is that his interpretation of psychoanalysis is a way of transcending Freud's gloomy and pessimistic view of man's fate. Yet Brown can see no hope, even with the help of his utopian psychoanalysis, short of the abolition of man. Compared to this despair, Freud's gloomy and stoic resignation, which still leaves room for certain limits within which an otherwise recalcitrant human nature may sometimes change for the better, appears as an almost refreshing optimism.

For those who share Brown's despair, however, no exposure of the nihilism of his thought is likely to make any difference—

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especially in America, where anti-intellectual and anticultural doctrines are very much in the American grain. Bell talks of the need to humanize technocracy and to tame the apocalypse. This is a worthy and traditional goal—a humanized life in a humanized society. But, in Brown's view, there is no time in which to achieve the enormous task of humanizing modern Western man's aggressive, dominating ego and technology. Brown evidently prefers to die in his own way, and so, perhaps, do many others among those who share what Bell calls the apocalyptic mode. Besides, although Brown's commitment to life is in doubt, it is by no means clear that his despair of modern Western man and culture is not in great part fully justified. This is worth serious consideration, even if alternatives and answers remain as unclear and difficult as they always have been when the issue is how to give vital human needs and concerns the central place they must have if human life of any kind is to continue and flourish.

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On Lévi-Strauss and Existentialism

DAVID MICHAEL LEVIN

WORD HAS BEEN BRUITED ABOUT, from France to this country, that the elderly knight of existentialism and the knight of structuralism are engaged in mortal strife. Jean-Paul Sartre, it would seem, feels he must defend the philosophy he fathered some four decades ago against the growing "challenge" of structuralism, a theory attributable to the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss and currently robust enough to usurp the position of almost canonical, and by now quite legendary, authority that existentialism once could claim in the aristocracy of the intellectuals. One is strongly tempted to believe that many intellectuals have a way of being as fickle toward their conceptual schemes and ideologies as some men are toward women.

Both views appear, however, to present coherent, meaningful and indeed compelling interpretations of human existence. Thus, confronted with such a disturbing controversy, we would do well to survey the opposing positions and determine whether there really are sufficient reasons for thinking them incompatible (as Sartre and Lévi-Strauss themselves apparently do). So I propose to examine the rival theories in the hope of showing, first, that they are not intrinsically incompatible, when properly understood, and further that there are, in fact, some necessary and interesting harmonies between them.

Existentialism affirms, among other things, but perhaps most consequentially, the primacy of existence (that is, freedom) rather than essence (that is, an innate nature, pattern, or form of predisposition) in the metaphysical condition of man. If we acknowledge, therefore, the sense in which each person's freedom, as a genuine reality, is "visibly" productive, efficacious in the world,

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and thus both historical and thoroughly social, truly constitutive of an essential *context* for the manifestation of freedom, then we should recognize that existentialism can in fact be the presupposition, or ground, of structuralism, and that, in a perfectly correlative way, structuralism can be the theoretical interpretation, in terms of a natural system of social expression, of just those primordial psychological realities that existentialism has disclosed and so valiantly guarded.

Contrary to custom, let us forbear attempting to define in abstraction what existential philosophy and anthropological structuralism purport to mean. Instead, assuming some prior familiarity with the main ideas polarized around these titles, let us develop their points of contention so that we can elicit, in a dialectical fashion, their quite distinctive and perhaps definitive properties.

Sartre's principal "existentialist" objection to Lévi-Strauss's structuralist approach to the study of man is that it abstracts from and even tends to deny the fundamental metaphysical condition of human existence, namely, our freedom, and that, in consequence, it tends to draw a totally distorted, perhaps even morally suspect, picture of human existence. He considers the structuralist approach to be guilty of transforming men into static, timeless objects, related to things in the world and to other men in purely formal, objective and timeless ways. Structuralism for him represents, in other words, the epitome of decadent, bourgeois, alienated science—another almost successful effort to subject man to the laws of the machine.

But, to the extent that this objection is justified (and I seriously doubt that it can be), it would hold equally well for absolutely any endeavor to contemplate and understand the life of man under the form of science; so what Sartre ultimately must defend is his picture of social science as such. He must demonstrate, first, that social science really functions in the way he supposes; second, that it is impossible, in principle, to study or look at man under the form of science; and third, that our essential condition of freedom, which in his eyes is both a hard *fact* and our dearest *value,* is (and *ought to be*) somehow sacrosanct, and would be

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morally violated under the scrutiny of science. On none of these points, as we shall see, can Sartre sustain a reasonable opposition. Primarily, this is so because he quite misunderstands what structuralism purports to say about man.

Lévi-Strauss assumes that scientific understanding is both desirable and possible. And he also assumes, justifiably, that scientific understanding consists in discerning what is common, typical and essential in the overwhelming diversity of societal artifacts, attitudes and practices with which the social scientist is concerned. Whether the sciences are to interpret the world of nature or, instead, the world of culture—nature transformed according to the will of man—they must attempt to "discover" and articulate in a systematic way whatever lawful relationships may exist among men, among objects, and in the world of objects whose primary reality is their being there-at-hand-for-men. When the ethnologist confronts thousands of "primitive" societies, quite unlike his own, and an endless multiplicity of facts, either he can remain at the aesthetic, nonscientific level of pure description, merely taking inventory of the facts he collects, or else he can attempt a meaningful "reduction" of this diversity within some workable structure, or system of schemata, to make visible what is common and, as it were, essential. In *The Savage Mind,* Lévi-Strauss states as a necessary condition for the possibility of the human sciences that they should "elaborate a system which plays the part of a synthesizing operator between ideas and facts, thereby turning them into *signs*. The mind thus passes from empirical diversity to conceptual simplicity and then from conceptual simplicity to meaningful synthesis." The "reduction" that a science requires, however, is not a form of "intellectual cannibalism." Quite the contrary. "Levels of reduction," he remarks, "cannot . . . be classed as superior and inferior, for the level taken as superior must, through the reduction, be expected to communicate retroactively some of its richness to the inferior level to which it will have been assimilated. Scientific explanation consists not in moving from the complex to the simple but in the replacement of a less intelligible complexity by one which is more so."

What we should note is his point that scientific inquiry, by its

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very nature, must *postulate,* as a regulative idea or hypothesis, that the things it seeks to *understand* are capable of arrangement and interpretation in systematic and lawful ways. The legitimacy of structuralism, like that of all the sciences generally, will be established if, as a purely logical matter, the subject being investigated lends itself to such treatment, and if, besides, this approach proves illuminating, and yields greater and deeper understanding. Lévi-Strauss does not claim that structuralism is the only conceivable means for understanding the societies he examines; nor does he presume that the structuralist approach exhausts the knowledge we may gain. Furthermore, a scientific treatment in terms of types, structures and pervasive regularities, attentive, for the most part, only to the universal aspect of things, and in this way calling into being the secret harmonies among its objects, may prudently ignore, without in any sense *denying,* the beautiful, sublime or exciting *uniqueness* of these objects. And, too, it would be the grossest misconception to think that the scientific form of understanding implies an access to things, or a lawful subjugation of them, that could rightly purport to be *sub specie aeternitatis.* In his essay, "From Mauss to Claude Lévi-Strauss," the philosopher Merleau-Ponty observes:

> Structure, like Janus, has two faces. On the one side it organizes its constituent parts according to an internal principle; it is meaning. But this meaning it bears is, so to speak, a clumsy meaning. Thus when the scientist formulates and conceptually determines structures, and constructs models by means of which he intends to understand existing societies, there is no question for him of substituting the model for reality. As a matter of principle, structure is no Platonic idea. To imagine imperishable archetypes which dominate the life of all possible societies would be to make the mistake the old linguistics made when it supposed that there was a natural affinity for a given meaning in certain sonorous material. It would be to forget that the same traits of physiognomy can have a different meaning in different societies, according to the system they are caught up in.

Fundamental to the Sartrian philosophy of *Being and Nothingness* is the differentiation of the *reflective* (knowing) *cogito* from the *pre-reflective cogito,* which is simply lived in awareness. Neces-

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sarily, therefore, all acts of reflection, all forms of knowing and understanding, constitute a certain "detachment" from the simply lived experience itself. This detachment, however, as the condition for all understanding generally, does not in itself amount to a *contradiction* between the reflective posture of the social scientist and the societies he investigates; it is not an impossible predicament that somehow falsifies the products of understanding. For if there is any predicament at all, it emerges only at the critical moment when understanding has become available for translation into forms of social and political *action*. The structural anthropologist, then, far from being detached from the life of man in any significant sense, *refuses* to understand existence in a purely formal manner, nor does he wish to construct a perfectly intelligible, perfectly ordered world with the arbitrary imagination of the poet; he is strongly committed, in fact, to the idea that the task that confronts the social scientist is, as Merleau-Ponty expressed it, "to deepen our insertion in being." Thus, contrary to what Sartre argues in his *Critique de la Raison Dialectique,* the anthropologist is not engaged in studying man the way entomologists study ants; but he must certainly have the faith, which Sartre apparently does not have, that history is not merely a "rational disorder."

Sartre wants to maintain that man is "condemned" to an absolute freedom. Seeing man from this vertiginous standpoint, he argues that structuralism must presuppose that men are really just mechanisms, governed by necessary laws not of their own choosing and, indeed, of which they are not originally conscious. He ascribes to structuralism the view that men play out their rule-governed lives according to and totally within certain already constituted forms or structures. Were this true, structuralism would, of course, be committed to a theory of determinism that denies the very possibility of both human freedom and a genuine human history. Thus, to sustain his idea that man is radically free, Sartre appears obliged to deny the existence of social forms or structures.

But how can we possibly surrender either horn of this dilemma? Consciousness of freedom can scarcely be repudiated without contradiction; but equally, structured and differentiated activities confront us wherever we halt to appreciate or decipher the phenome-

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non of man. The way out is simple, provided we do not insist on preserving for man an *absolute* freedom, and provided, of course, that we properly construe the concept of structure with which Lévi-Strauss is concerned.

Without wading too deeply in the murky waters of the freewill problem, still a source of great perplexity for philosophers, we surely must acknowledge that Sartre's antirationalism is far too sweeping, if it entails the concept of absolute freedom. For such a freedom of the will, if it were to exist, would abrogate all history, all intelligible meaning to our actions; it would make of our world a mere sequence of episodes, discrete and, paradoxically, for precisely this reason, altogether determinate and irrevocable. For meaning and history always constitute, with respect to some free action, a relevant background of already determinate structures, with which the free agent has to reckon, whatever he may do. And it is just because his actions articulate a meaning-structure that transcends, in its implications, the moment of decision, and becomes henceforth the *background* of the actions, that nothing is truly irrevocable and freedom is actually made possible.

In the closing chapter of *Structural Anthropology,* Lévi-Strauss observes that "Anthropology aims to be a *semeiological* science, and takes as a guiding principle that of 'meaning.'" Structures, then, are the natural *expressions* of freedom, although, to be sure, their advent necessarily amounts to a certain "inhibition" of this freedom. But such inhibition is no different, in fact, from the way in which a language might be characterized, in a dramatic way, as "coercing" the thoughts that it is intended to express. And correspondingly, therefore, the function, in the social sciences, of various ideal constructs and essences, or archetypes (for example, the *Economic Man,* the *Bourgeois Mentality,* the *Conspicuous Consumer,* the *Oedipal Complex*) is not to deny or ignore our free will, but rather just the contrary, to *clarify* its enactment and its eventuality—in brief, its expressive content.

Sarte, in an essay for *L'Arc,* foists upon structuralism the most unreasonable interpretations he can think of. It is especially pernicious to suppose that the structures that Lévi-Strauss has discovered in the primitive societies he studied—structures expressing

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kinship, modes of exchange, forms of authority, communication, and so forth—logically entail believing that the members of these societies are mere mechanisms, obeying certain natural laws and also a certain finite number of structural laws imposed on them "from outside," as it were, by the society itself. Such a picture, reminiscent of the mechanistic, Newtonian social theory of Thomas Hobbes, has been stoutly repudiated, ever since the pioneering work of men like Durkheim; it is now commonly acknowledged to succeed only in making totally mysterious and impenetrable the complicated workings of these societies. Clearly, it represents an operational hypothesis with which no sane ethnologist would dream of equipping himself, as he set out to explore some dark and far-off tribal community.

In one sense, the structures that the ethnologist discerns and postulates, in his explanatory theory, are constituted in and through the very process, fundamentally symbolical, of constructing and confirming the theory employed to explain these structures; and, in another sense, these structures are "already there," awaiting theoretical articulation in terms of structural concepts. Who can doubt that men associate and segregate, that they live according to laws and taboos, and diverse social pressures that impose upon them patterns of rigid conformity, and that they acquiesce or otherwise contribute to the countless structured practices within which even their most defiant acts are situated? What the philosopher Wittgenstein called "forms of life" simply have to be acknowledged. They are present, no less genuine as facts than the freedom that animates our gestures and our deeds. And if these forms of life exist, then surely we should (and can) interrogate them for the answers they will hold about the human world. But, of course, it is also true that these forms of life are first brought to expression, given a determinate function and significance, through the explicit postulation, always in a purely tentative way, of the thoughtful scientist. And thus, insofar as these structures are the special property of the theory that has bred them, they are altogether accessible to a process of study in search of their subtle interconnections, their harmonies, and intimations of what, following Wittgenstein, we might call their "family resemblances."

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It is certainly a mistake to think, as Sartre does, that the mere existence of any forms should refute the reality of freedom. Indeed, it would seem that forms of life and freedom not only coexist, but constitute a single, unified phenomenon, just as much, for example, as my handwritten signature, that absolute and imponderable fusion of a unique act of freedom with a unique appearance of form. Because structures are expressions of consciousness, either at a stage of recognition, perhaps even lucid understanding, or instead at the stage of pre-reflective presence, they are also *significative.* They evoke, convey, organize, codify, cajole and invoke the occasions of life; they endow these occasions with otherness, in short, with a history and a certain independence. Structuralism attempts to weave these structure-meanings into "living" tapestries; and the tapestry as a whole permits a higher order of understanding (truly "scientific"), never feasible when the various meanings were examined only in isolation from one another and from the sense of the whole itself.

To speak of structures, invariant forms, laws, or regularities, and a limited number of inherent mental categories is by no means to imply that the persons inhabiting the societies thus described are somehow *constrained* by these invariant laws or these categorial limitations. Sartre confusedly understands Lévi-Strauss to be enunciating strictly *causal* laws, holding between structures and the thoughts and behaviors of human beings. In fact, what Lévi-Strauss intends is to *clarify,* in terms of systems of meanings, the thoughts and behaviors he observes, and whose genesis in the spontaneity of consciousness he has never disputed. That there are just a limited number of mental categories, that societies exhibit invariant structural propensities, and so forth, are merely working hypotheses, conceptual necessities for engaging in scientific research. Our tools of analysis may indeed *define* what we can discern and describe as the manifestations of freedom in a particular society; but there is no reason to suppose that these tools causally constrain the actions under consideration. And, to include now the other aspect of structure, there is no reason to think, with Sartre, that the meaning-structures found present and efficacious in some given actions or attitudes are thoroughly *determinative,* in a causal way,

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rather than evocative and truly solicitous of them, providing the most diverse channels for the play of instinct and choice. Individual consciousness and genuine collective creativity, *sui generis,* within the social context, are thus not at all impossible for structuralist theory. Nor should we think that response to structures (such as kinship practices, incest taboos, and stable and recurrent themes in mythologies) must be a mechanical one, as if the response were causally bound to specific programmed circuits. For programmed circuits are not meanings; and it is inconceivable that the mechanical types of response that the former bring about could likewise be produced through the dominion of pure meaning.

Significative situations and their significant responses cannot be treated according to the model of stimuli and causally determined response. Lévi-Strauss has shown this to be true of the social sciences, especially anthropology, just as the Gestalt psychologists have shown this to be true of psychology. Thus, Sartre is greatly in error when he takes structural concepts to necessitate a mechanistic, causal treatment. Structures, meanings, when present in a certain society, must of course be considered as part of the *given situation,* defining and, in a sense, constraining action. Yet Sartre and Lévi-Strauss should be able to agree that these given structures, no matter how central and compelling, are what they are only because it is *we* who have sustained them as meaning; their compulsion, therefore, is the burden of a meaning for which, ultimately, we alone can be responsible.

Should we, now, overlook the poignant motif in *Tristes Tropiques,* the most intimate of Lévi-Strauss's writings, that even the oldest and most obdurate of structures in primitive societies are rapidly disappearing before we have a chance to *know* them, often disappearing, ironically enough, just because we have, in order to *know* them, inserted ourselves and all our paraphernalia into their world and, quite unwittingly, allowed this vulnerable world to vanish? So these formidable structures prove to be, after all, just the ephemeral things they are: clearly, no brute and hardy *causes.* And isn't this book, in truth, a muted elegy, a lament not for the presence of freedom itself in man's estate, but for the blind logic of this freedom and its sorry consequence?

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We, the truly civilized, who run in pursuit of the innocent savage, hoping, it may be, to discover some unsuspected options to the old way of life—we have freedom, too; but we have chosen to value the sweep of technology and therefore, also, every moment of violence to the old order of things that the choice might entail. The symbols of older values are simply reinterpreted, embodied within different symbolic structures; and now, as before, through and through these structures, there moves the indomitable spontaneity of our signifying existence. It is not, in the end, the structural anthropologist whom Sartre should repudiate, but rather the false "nation-builders" and entrepreneurs, all those whose every act of finger-pointing conceals or defeats the reign of free signification.

We might do well, in conclusion, to consider the views of Marshall McLuhan, for there are some remarkable resemblances between them and the principal concepts of Lévi-Strauss's structuralism. McLuhan's message is that the medium, that is to say, the form or structure of social relations, is *more* revealing about the nature of a society (especially an advanced one such as ours) than the literal content (the *explicit* meaning or message) will be. Actually, then, his idea is a heuristic hypothesis, capable in principle of empirical confirmation; it conjectures that, although the social sciences can always benefit from detailed analyses of the explicit or intentional content (that is, meaning or purpose) of a social institution, practice or situation, they can gain even deeper insight if they attend to the underlying "latent" meaning that the institution, practice or situation incorporates. In sum, he is arguing that, for the purposes of a scientific understanding of a society (notably, ours), we should work with the hypothesis that *structures* are the primary carriers of significance, but not necessarily, of course, the only carriers. And to consider structures from this point of view is to *interpret* them (and not straightforwardly to *describe* them) in terms of their significant functions within the context of their society. Now, since the functions of the "objects" investigated by the social scientist must be rigorously conceived in structural terms, structuralism and functionalism are correlative methodic approaches.

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McLuhan presumably wants to persuade the massive reading market, normally out of touch with the current work of men like Lévi-Strauss, Talcott Parsons and Robert K. Merton, that these approaches are truly fruitful. But, because of the orientation of his appeal, it is crucial to make it quite clear that this concept of "function" must be completely dissociated from the concept of explicit, intentional purpose—"meaning" in the ordinary sense. Thus, for example, it would seem to be a legitimate application of McLuhan's contention to observe that, in trying to understand the character of a tiny Vermont town in which there suddenly arose a "leftist" women's organization, the social scientist should be especially attentive to factors such as the economically catastrophic closedown of all defense-contract factories in the town, coupled with the installation of a nuclear experimentation laboratory. In this context, there would be less "informational content" in the public pronouncements of the organization, let us say, in regard to the political program it advocates, than in the socioeconomic backgrounds of the women, in the mere fact that they responded in just *this* way to *those* conditions, and in the social changes in the town that were brought about through such radical political and organizational realignments.

It deserves to be noted, here, that McLuhan's theory, as related above, is hardly a *bête noire,* and most certainly not very original. Although true, for the most part, it would seem to have derived its truth and inspiration from the silent labors of the great structuralists and functionalists. But once we have acknowledged this, we are in a position to recognize what is really distinctive, and perhaps novel, about McLuhan's message: its absolutely decisive appeal to our rational judgment, and hence to our free will in acting on the decisions made. McLuhan's uniqueness, in other words, lies in the *moral employment* of his message, in its value as a gesture of moral exhortation. And we might say that if his theory is true, then it must also be self-referential; that is, what really counts is the medium, the significance of his message as a timely public "gesture," and not, contrary to general opinion, the actual, explicit meaning of his message.

We shall soon consider how this interpretation of McLuhan

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bears on Sartre's existentialism and on his attitude toward structuralism. First, however, it will be interesting to take note of two stories in Lévi-Strauss's *Tristes Tropiques,* which could be taken as concrete illustrations, or confirmations, of McLuhan's ideas, and which suggest, moreover, that the relevance of the McLuhan "message" can be successfully generalized to help "decode" societies very different from our own. In the one story, Lévi-Strauss describes how some Christian missionaries, penetrating deep into the Brazilian jungle and settling in a primitive tribal village, unintentionally reorganized the entire social fabric of this village simply by imposing on it the rectangular principle of village layout and private housing. The tribe, accustomed instead to a circular principle, according to which they constructed even their kinship system, became totally "dislocated" and anarchic under the seemingly insignificant modifications imposed by the missionaries. In the second story, which illustrates at the same time a different dimension of the structuralist approach and also the ideas of McLuhan, Lévi-Strauss recounts how the chieftain of an Indian tribe in Brazil used to watch him writing down his field results and, one day when the anthropologist's notebooks were unattended, managed to steal a look at them for himself. And this chieftain, although utterly unable to read and write, gained incredible charisma and authority within the tribe, simply by imitating, willy-nilly, the Western script and showing his "writings" to the other tribesmen.

These stories invest primitive societies with McLuhan's "media"; but there is a special point to McLuhan's observations about *this* country that immediately differentiates structural (that is, media-) analysis of our society from structural analysis of primitive tribes. It is here that McLuhan has something to add to Lévi-Strauss's approach. In *Structural Anthropology* (Chapter XVI), Lévi-Strauss writes:

> I should like to see progress transferred from the rank of a universal category of human development to that of a particular mode of existence, characteristic of our own society—and perhaps of several others—whenever that society reaches the stage of self-awareness.

In contrast to all the primitive societies, we *have* reached an un-

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precedented stage of *self*-consciousness, both as individuals and as collectivities; so that we are not only influenced by the various significative structures that a sociologist could discern, but are, to an extent never before enjoyed, able to be influenced by and act on our profound self-consciousness (understanding) of these forms. So McLuhan should be regarded not so much as a scientist describing some new facts or proposing some revolutionary theory, but as a kind of moral philosopher, primarily engaged in persuading us to see the facts and theories already current in the scientific community in a new light. Cognizant of the movement, hence of the potentialities in contemporary science and its achievements (mostly technological), he is really calling upon us to undertake a radical and thorough *moral reappraisal.* He is convinced, it would seem, that we must attain a more profound and a more responsible stage of understanding, if we hope to control or engineer those transformations within the existing social structures that would fulfill our most imaginative and most sublime aspirations for humanity.

In this context, Sartre's opposition to structuralism, and more generally to the scientific mode of understanding existence, is truly ironic, since it constitutes a serious obstruction to the attainment of that greater understanding, that more intense self-consciousness, which must be a necessary practical condition for the concrete manifestation of freedom. For, if freedom is not to remain a mere abstraction, a metaphysical state or essence, then it must be accorded the power that comes from a *mastery* of the forms of life, such as they are; and this, in turn, challenges man to understand both himself and his world in terms of their significant structural properties. So much, indeed, Marx himself could fully appreciate. Sartre's repudiation of structuralism, on the grounds that it denies freedom in the name of reason, is thus completely misguided. Science, as the highest stage of self-consciousness, is an essential condition for the possibility of freedom. Consequently, we must judge that the irrationalism that Sartre appears to embrace will ultimately lead us to the kind of intellectual paralysis and moral skepticism that can purport nothing but the final abrogation of our possibilities for freedom, and, in that way,

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our total defeat amidst a world of machines that we ourselves have created.

Why, then, do we continue to respect the judgments of Sartre? Because we can sense, as the motive behind his outrageous pronouncements, a terrible fear which our own hearts respond to: Sartre is sage enough to perceive that any understanding, based on the concept of structure, can readily lend itself to reactionary or malevolent ends. Any such understanding can deftly conceal the possibility of living choices. But surely Lévi-Strauss cannot be found guilty of fixating these structures, or misusing structuralist theory to reinforce the domination of existing social structurations. No structures are legitimated, just because they happen to exist. In fact, in the Introduction to his *Structural Anthropology,* Lévi-Strauss asserts:

> Far from being satisfied, then, with a static relativism—. . . I denounce it as a danger ever present on the anthropologist's path. My solution is constructive, since it derives from the same principles two *apparently* contradictory attitudes, namely, respect for societies very different from ours, and active participation in the transformation of our own society.

Nevertheless, he remains, to the last, quite detached from the movement of thought into the realm of social action. And just here is where both Sartre and McLuhan have taken their stand, summoning men to create the world of their dreams—if they but will.

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Between the New Year and the Snow

LAWRENCE RAAB

White as whisperings in the turning air,
cherishing not voices now nor separate names,
but white only in the tumbling trees,
secret as each stream's closing,
this snow falls. As its hour's descent makes
a passage not meant to stay, let it come
only for the sake of its first falling.
As it may mark a change of habit
or of hope, let it be attended by no company
of voices, no quarrel of birds, no lights
bearing their windows away. Then, hemlock and pine
in their white rest might become simple
as a single tree. Let all the passing bells be
muffled as wool, and for this one curve of night
let every janitor stooped heavy with keys
leave all doors inexplicably open,
that the wind may turn among the hallways,
and the snow falling find nothing
which cannot be covered. Last of all, I ask
that if our woods harbor no angels, yet may
the songs of angels gather in the highest branches,
calling themselves by any name they wish, dancing now
like shadows which have lost their fears, and now
on every slip of sky and covering of field asking only
that in this time and singing they too
might be made whole, between the new year and the snow.

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On Frantz Fanon

J. E. SEIGEL

UNTIL RECENTLY, few Americans had heard of Frantz Fanon. His death in a Washington, D. C., hospital in 1961 went practically unnoticed in this country. Now, suddenly, he is a presence in our lives. His last book, *The Wretched of the Earth,** is cited as the handbook of the revolution in our midst; his life and thought feed the stream of our fate. Yet it remains difficult to get a clear picture of him. Militant blacks (and some of their white cousins) see their hopes in Fanon; frightened whites see their fears. The two opposing perspectives reinforce each other: both give an image of a determined apostle of violence and a romantic, even messianic revolutionary. Yet Fanon was more than this, and the parts of his life this image neglects also speak to our condition. Fanon felt the split between blacks and whites to the depths of his soul, but his zeal was to overcome it, not to solidify it. He gave himself wholeheartedly to the anticolonial rebellion in Algeria, but he feared and hated violence even while he glorified it. Fanon has been made the symbol of conflict; we must see that he also stood for reconciliation. To do so is to move a step closer to reconciliation ourselves.

Frantz Fanon grew up in Martinique, where he was born in 1925. He always remembered his West Indian origins, even while trying to identify himself first as a Frenchman, and later as an anti-French Algerian rebel. He studied medicine and psychiatry in France, and was sent to direct a psychiatric hospital in the (still

* Originally published as *Les damnés de la terre,* Paris, 1961. American edition, New York, Grove Press, 1967.

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French-ruled) Algerian city of Blida. Meanwhile, he had written his first and most personally revealing book, *Black Skin, White Masks.** According to Simone de Beauvoir, who knew him shortly before his death, "when the Algerian war broke out, he was torn in all directions at once; he hated to give up a status it had cost so much to attain, yet all colonized peoples were his brothers; he recognized the Algerian cause as identical with his own." After a period of surreptitiously aiding the rebels, he resigned his French post and openly joined them. Until he died in 1961 Fanon worked for the Algerians, writing articles and editing a newspaper, serving for a time as ambassador to Ghana, traveling through Africa to encourage solidarity among anticolonial movements. It was apparently in Ghana that he first fell ill with a sickness later diagnosed as leukemia. He sought the help of specialists, first in Russia and then, reluctantly (for he viewed America as racist and imperialist), in the United States. While he lay dying in a Washington, D. C., hospital, his last work, *The Wretched of the Earth,* appeared and received accolades in the French leftist press. After his death his body was flown back to North Africa and buried with national honors by the Algerian National Army of Liberation.

The jumbled pattern of Fanon's life prepares us for his thought: he was a man of contradictions. In contrast to the one-dimensional image put forth by some of his disciples, he was far from being an unquestioning apostle of violence. In *Black Skin, White Masks* his mood was often angry, but it was above all searching, inquiring, mistrustful of irrational enthusiasm. "These truths do not have to be hurled in men's faces," he declared. "They are not intended to ignite fervor. I do not trust fervor. Every time it has burst out somewhere, it has brought fire, famine, misery . . . and contempt for man." Of course Fanon did not always hold to this view. But the Fanon who did not trust fervor must be confronted if we are to understand the Fanon who later preached violence.

Black Skin, White Masks is a complex book. It is a rich and unshapely mixture of personal reminiscence, philosophical analysis,

* Originally *Peau noire, masques blancs,* Paris, 1952. American edition, New York, Grove Press, 1967.

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literary criticism and psychiatric case history, all tied together by a single theme: the fact of being black in a white world. Fanon sought to delve into blackness, to make it yield up the painful reality behind the masks it wears in the world, and finally to overcome it, to find the means by which blackness could be made irrelevant by merging it in the larger fact of humanity. "To us, the man who adores the Negro is as 'sick' as the man who abominates him. Conversely, the black man who wants to turn his race white is as miserable as he who preaches hatred for the whites. In the absolute, the black is no more to be loved than the Czech, and truly what is to be done is to set man free."

Fanon's road to these conclusions was rough and painful, and he had not really traveled it as completely by the time he wrote his book as these quotations suggest. Yet he had read the signposts, learned the directions, and arrived at a point that gave a clear view of the goal. He knew that in a white world to be human is to be white. The black who grows up in this world learns the lesson just as whites do: wanting to be a man he tries to be a white. But this is denied him. Through their fear and distrust, whites remind him that he is black. "Whether concretely or symbolically, the black man stands for the bad side of the character. . . . The archetype of the lowest values is represented by the Negro." Man is civilized, rational, the Negro is primitive, genital. The black who has had this consciousness forced on him has two choices, either to reject his own self, or to spurn the world that created the dilemma. Only the second alternative seems to offer hope. Seizing it, the Negro turns on the white world and celebrates blackness, desperately cultivating those parts of himself that cannot be mistaken for white. But this attempt to storm his way into full humanity must fail: it excludes at the start all those parts of man that the white world has appropriated for itself. It is not a means of reaching manhood but a truncating of humanity. Painfully the black who has set out along this path must find his way to a different one, where blackness can become not a fractional humanity but a form of fully human existence.

For Fanon himself this itinerary led through the concept of *négritude,* the intense and sometimes frenzied pursuit of black

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consciousness championed by Léopold Senghor, which inspired many African writers in the late forties and fifties. Fanon's discovery of *négritude* was a discovery of tribal culture and African history in its many aspects, of the sculpture of African natives, of rhythm, of emotion, of the occult, but also of the gentleness, unity and social harmony of the African societies described by early European explorers. Yet on a deeper, personal level, Fanon by 1949 had begun to see it also as something else. The stress on emotion and primitivism was a rejection of the rationality on which white civilization was based, and it led toward a rejection of all rationality. "I had rationalized the world and the world had rejected me on the basis of color prejudice. Since no agreement was possible on the level of reason, I threw myself back toward unreason. It was up to the white man to be more irrational than I. . . . I am made of the irrational. I wade in the irrational." Later, in *The Wretched of the Earth,* Fanon commented further on this stage in his own and other Negroes' development. Negro writers caught up in it had produced some good poetry, but the kind of thinking it encouraged was "sterile in the extreme." The search for blackness degenerates into banal exoticism, a cult of the sari and the pampootie. "Going back to your own people means to become a dirty wog, to go native as much as you can, to become unrecognizable, and to cut off those wings that before you had allowed to grow."

Fanon earned the right to reject this phase in the evolution of black consciousness by the torture of his own passage through it. In *Black Skin, White Masks* the pride and hope of his first acceptance of *négritude* still shines through the dense torment of his later rejection of it. It was Jean-Paul Sartre who destroyed the foundations of Fanon's belief in *négritude*. Sartre's essay, "Orphée Noir," published in 1948 as a preface to an anthology of Negro and Madagascan poetry, identified *négritude* as an antiracist racism that could only be a stage on the way to a higher consciousness. What would replace the "subjective, existential, ethnic idea of *négritude,*" in Sartre's view was the "objective, positive, exact idea of proletariat." Only a society without class oppression could eliminate race oppression, the French philosopher argued, and the Marxism

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of many young Negro writers was a sign of their own recognition that *négritude* was inadequate by itself. Sartre therefore concluded that *négritude* was "the root of its own destruction . . . a transition and not a conclusion, a means and not an ultimate end." To Fanon this conclusion first appeared as "a blow that can never be forgiven." How could the black thinker and writer value his own emerging consciousness if he were forced to regard it as a mere minor term in the Hegelian dialectic? "In all truth, in all truth I tell you, my shoulders slipped out of the framework of the world, my feet could no longer feel the touch of the ground."

That Fanon's emerging black identity could be so deeply shaken by Sartre's arguments is a sign that he may already have felt unsatisfied with certain aspects of it. Fanon reveals himself throughout his writings as an intellectual, a man who lived much of his emotional life in the realm of thought. The power of Sartre's arguments over him is one sign of this. For such a man, the elements of *négritude* that Fanon himself would later associate with a cult of irrationality may have created conflicts even while they seemed to answer deeply felt needs. These elements had to be exorcised. Fanon responded to Sartre's challenge by seeking to reconstruct his black identity in a manner that eliminated them. "What had been broken in pieces was rebuilt." It was rebuilt with certain pieces left out, and with others occupying different places from those they had before. Fanon could not build a self-consciousness for himself without making the fact of blackness the central element. What he could do was forge an attitude toward his blackness that regarded it not as a particular aspect of humanity in which certain human qualities flourished while others languished, but rather as a particular form of humanity containing the whole range of human potentials just as any other form did.

In effect, what happens is this: As I begin to recognize that the Negro is the symbol of sin, I catch myself hating the Negro. But then I recognize that I am a Negro. There are two ways out of this conflict. Either I ask others to pay no attention to my skin, or else I want them to be aware of it. I try then to find value for what is bad—since I have unthinkingly conceded that the black man is the color of evil. In order to terminate this neurotic situation, in which I am compelled to choose an unhealthy, conflictual solution, fed on fantasies, hostile, inhuman

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in short, I have only one solution: to rise above this absurd drama that others have staged around me, to reject the two terms that are equally unacceptable, and through one human being, to reach out for the universal.

Black Skin, White Masks was Fanon's attempt to "reach out for the universal." In addition to recounting his own development and setting it in the general context of "Negro psychopathology," Fanon pursued human universality by exposing and combating various attempts to make the Negro something other than a species of humanity. Combining Hegel and Sartre with Freud and Jung, Fanon saw the Negro not as a product of biology, but of history and case history. Like the Jew of Sartre's *Anti-Semite and Jew,* the Negro of Fanon's analysis is a creation of those who oppress him. In one chapter Fanon denied the contention of the French psychologist Mannoni that African natives had a peculiar psychology that gave them a need for subjection to others. In another, he studied the black hero of René Maran's novel *Un homme pareil aux autres.* Jean Veneuse's inability to accept the love of the white girl he loved could not be taken as a sign that the gap between black and white was unbridgeable, Fanon argued. Rather, Veneuse suffered from a peculiar psychological malady, an "abandonment neurosis," which produced a fundamental lack of trust in himself. Veneuse's blackness was not the cause of his inability to love and be loved (except as it affected his childhood experiences), but the sign of it, the metaphorical expression of his incomplete humanity. "His color is only an attempt to explain his psychic structure." Of course, important differences between Negroes and whites existed, Fanon recognized. As a psychiatrist he was struck by the absence of the Oedipus complex among African natives. But this phenomenon meant only that Freud's concepts were tied to the experience of Europeans, not that Negroes were more or less manly than whites. Such recognitions would, Fanon believed, allow the Negro progressively to rise above the dilemma created by white society. He offered his book as "a mirror . . . in which it will be possible to discern the Negro on the road to disalienation."

Yet, as suggested above, if Fanon in 1952 was on the way to overcoming his alienation as a black man, he had not arrived at the

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goal. *Black Skin, White Masks* is a tortured book. The desire to merge blackness with a wider humanity even made the cry "I am a Negro" more violent in the face of white society's dehumanization of blacks. Black emancipation was still in the future; to achieve it would require a struggle in which the black joined his cause with that of all others who were oppressed. Here Fanon hinted at the positive value he would later place on struggle and conflict as a test of manhood and will. The possibility of a meaningful struggle led him to prefer the situation of Negroes in America to that of those in France. In France the Negro had no chance to test his identity or prove his manhood. "In the United States, the Negro battles and is battled. There are laws that, little by little, are invalidated under the Constitution. There are other laws that forbid certain forms of discrimination. And we can be sure that nothing is going to be given free." Yet, as these lines suggest, Fanon's position was not that of a black nationalist or a Marxist revolutionary. "I have no wish to be the victim of the *Fraud* of a black world," he wrote, and "I am not a prisoner of history. I should not seek there for the meaning of my destiny." The final words of the book neither proclaimed nor envisioned ultimate solution; instead they were a prayer for human growth: "O my body, make of me always a man who questions!"

Black Skin, White Masks has beauty, poetry and insight, but its most striking quality is its incompleteness. Fanon believed he had glimpsed the solutions to the awesome problems that beset him, but the mere sight of them gave him no resting place and no certainty that he would ever find one. The torment of Fanon in his twenties is easily—perhaps too easily—labeled today: it is a classic case of what Erik Erikson has taught us to call an identity conflict. Using Erikson's terms, we may say that Fanon's crisis had not reached any viable solution in *Black Skin, White Masks,* but had only arrived at the aggravated self-consciousness that Erikson calls "identity consciousness." "Identity-consciousness is, of course, overcome only by a sense of identity won in action. Only he who 'knows where he is going and who is going with him' demonstrates an unmistakable if not always easily definable unity and radiance of appearance and being." It is precisely this "sense of identity won

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in action" that Fanon could not achieve on the basis of the position put forth in *Black Skin, White Masks.* He could recognize that the concept of *négritude* as others understood it posited the Negro as (to use another of Erikson's terms) a "pseudospecies," and he could proclaim his solidarity with a wider humanity. But where could he find the members of that humanity who would join with him in the actions that would cement their oneness? Fanon's attempt to proclaim himself a *black man* (giving equal emphasis to both words) at the time he wrote *Black Skin, White Masks* could not put an end to the neurotic situation white society imposed on him: it could only re-create unendingly.

We know the vehicle that finally lifted Fanon out of this vicious and tragic circle: the Algerian revolt. If the account of Fanon's thinking put forward here is correct, then his hesitation before openly joining the Algerian cause may have a significance not suggested in the passage quoted above from Simone de Beauvoir. To join the revolt was not just to give up his status in the French civil service, it was to give up his hold on the wider values of universal humanity represented by French culture in order to cast his lot unconditionally with the oppressed. In the writings that came out of his Algerian experience Fanon no longer tried to overcome his alienation from white Europe: he reveled in it. Especially in *The Wretched of the Earth* (which its American publisher calls a "handbook for the black revolution"), but also in *A Dying Colonialism,** Fanon turned his back on Europe and blasted black intellectuals who could not shake their fascination with white culture. These writings give none of the sense of incompleteness of his earlier work. The mood of searching and questioning has been replaced by an all-determining commitment. Through participation in the Algerian struggle Fanon found a sense of identity won in action which his earlier attempt to assimilate himself to Europe could not provide.

The new perspective meant a revision of the analysis of "disalienation" given in *Black Skin, White Masks.* The individualist diagnosis worked out there was replaced by one that stressed the

* Original title *L'An Cinq de la Révolution Algérienne,* Paris, 1959. American edition, New York, Grove Press, 1965.

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relationship between the intellectual and the people. Now it was not an internal psychological crisis that led black writers and thinkers to a rejection of white culture; rather, "at the moment when the nationalist parties are mobilizing the people in the name of national independence, the native intellectual sometimes spurns these acquisitions which he suddenly feels make him a stranger in his own land." This movement of rejection led to the stage of *négritude,* which Fanon criticized here for its negative character as he had before. What condemned it in his eyes now, however, was not its truncated view of humanity, but its concentration on a people's past rather than their present. In order to overcome the limitations of this stage the writer had only one course open to him: to become a leader in the revolutionary struggle and thus to fight for freedom and the creation of a national community.

The best-known aspect of *The Wretched of the Earth* is indeed a central feature of the book: its glorification of violence. "Decolonization is always a violent phenomenon." Violence is a necessary and welcome aspect of revolutionary struggle. The violence of the revolutionaries is the only response to the settlers' compartmentalization of colonial society. Violence creates community where none had existed before. Violence is the native's natural reaction to praise of Western culture, in whose name he had been oppressed. We are far removed from the younger Fanon who "did not trust fervor"; the old identity of questioning intellectual has been suppressed. In place of (what he now described as) "the idea of a society of individuals where each person shuts himself up in his own subjectivity, and whose only wealth is individual thought," Fanon affirmed his discovery of "the substance of village assemblies, the cohesion of people's committees, and the extraordinary fruitfulness of local meetings and groupments." The glorification of violence was a celebration of mass action, an inversion of the personal stance he had taken before.

Fanon moved away from his earlier individualism in another sense. No longer the analyst of interior experience, he turned sociologist and political scientist. The terms of the discussion were post-Marxian: economic realities were determining, but they in turn derived from the racial structure of colonial society. Fanon

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made use of Marxist categories, but he had no patience with the Marxist faith that history itself would bring victory to the oppressed. Engels' attempt to fit tactics to stages of historical development was puerile. Parts of Fanon's analysis are closer to Lenin (or perhaps to Mao) than to Marx. This is particularly true of his view of the native middle class. Small and weak, composed not of powerful businessmen but only of their agents and intermediaries, from taxi drivers to traders and small wholesalers, the native bourgeoisie had strictly limited aims and capacities. Living only in the cities, the middle class could not express the needs of the rural masses. In its view decolonization meant only taking over colonialist businesses for itself—nationalization—not the social and political development of the whole country. If the revolution were to succeed in moving the country toward a genuine transformation, it had to involve the peasants of the countryside as well as the traders and workers of the towns. These peasants needed the help of intellectuals who recognized the limitations of urbanized natives, but the intellectuals could not be the major revolutionary force or constitute a Leninist-type party.

The violence of the anticolonial revolution would take place in the "international context" of the Cold War, and Fanon admitted that only in this context could colonial revolts succeed. The superior force of the colonial power could not be overcome by the weaker insurgents; instead the Europeans, for reasons of their own internal and international situation, would find the struggle no longer worth its cost and throw in the towel. Fanon proclaimed himself a socialist, but he refused to equate the native struggle against colonialism with the fight between socialism and capitalism. He recommended gratitude to the socialist countries for their aid against imperialist powers, but he coupled it with a plea that the Third World refuse to become a factor in the East-West competition, concentrating instead on the development of its own values, method and style. The looming international question to Fanon in 1961 was not between socialism and capitalism, but between the rich and the poor.

Thus the determined revolutionary of *The Wretched of the Earth* and *A Dying Colonialism* differed profoundly from the

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brooding, inward author of *Black Skin, White Masks*. Yet the two writers were after all the same man, and their identity is not hard to discover. Beneath the social and political analysis of decolonization there remained the earlier concern for overcoming the dehumanizing effects of alienation and fragmentation. For a time the anticolonial struggle would magnify black feelings of separation from whites, but its final outcome would be the destruction of black racism, not the intensification of it. In *A Dying Colonialism* Fanon wrote of white Europeans who joined the Algerians in the face of French actions during the rebellion, and he accepted them with enthusiasm. A description of the same phenomenon in *The Wretched of the Earth* led to the declaration that, "In their weary road toward rational knowledge the people must also give up their too-simple conception of their overlords. The species is breaking up under their very eyes." As some whites join the rebels in their struggle, the "primitive Manicheism of the settler" is overthrown. In another sphere, the revolution itself destroys both the basis and the need for a racist culture: "To believe that it is possible to create a black culture is to forget that niggers are disappearing, just as those people who brought them into being are seeing the breakup of their economic and cultural supremacy." Fanon was still trying to "reach out for the universal."

One of the clearest pieces of evidence for the continuity between the younger and the older Fanon is the description Simone de Beauvoir gives of his state of mind when she knew him in 1961. Her picture accords so well with the image that emerges from his writings that we must quote it extensively:

> Though an advocate of violence, he was horrified by it; when he described the mutilations inflicted on the Congolese by the Belgians or by the Portuguese on the Angolans—lips pierced and padlocked, faces flattened by *palmatorio* blows—his expression would betray anguish; but it did so no less when he talked about the "counterviolence" of the Negroes and the terrible reckonings implied by the Algerian revolution. He attributed this repugnance to his condition as an intellectual; everything he had written against the intellectuals had been written against himself as well. . . . It was evident that he found it distressing not to be fighting the battle on his native soil, and even more so not to be an Algerian-born. "Above all, I don't want to become a professional revo-

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lutionary," he told us anxiously. . . . He had a passionate desire to send down roots.

One thing this revealing portrait may show is that Fanon had never really resolved the crisis of forging an identity for himself. He could neither accept nor rid himself of his essentially European role of intellectual; he assumed the related career of professional revolutionary with even greater reluctance. We have already taken note of Fanon's own analysis of the antirational style of the black intellectual who turns against European culture. This is not the dominant style of *The Wretched of the Earth,* but it sometimes breaks through, as in the assertion that, because Europeans have long taken raw materials from Africa, Asia and Latin America, "Europe is literally the creation of the Third World." This kind of extravagance may have satisfied one side of Fanon's character, but it recalls a style of thought he previously decried. Many of Fanon's earlier contradictions remained unresolved, including his love-hate relationship with Europe. The conclusion of *The Wretched of the Earth* is a deep well of ambivalence toward the European experience and its values. "When I search for Man in the technique and the style of Europe, I see only a succession of negations of man, and an avalanche of murders." Yet "All the elements of a solution to the great problems of humanity have, at different times, existed in European thought." The struggle to create a new man must be carried out "for Europe, for ourselves, and for humanity."

Most people will probably find Fanon's attempt to bridge the gap between violence and civilization by a romantic faith in revolution not only unsatisfying but dangerously simplistic. Already his name has been linked with one of the bogeymen of modern European history, Georges Sorel. But Fanon should not be confused with Sorel. His advocacy of violence is not a "myth" in Sorel's sense: it was not put forward as a substitute for a searching analysis of what revolution means, concretely, for all the individuals and groups who are caught up in it. On the contrary, Fanon's account of revolution, of the social divisions and antagonisms it brings out, of the mental disorders it breeds, of its horror as well as its promise, deserves a prominent place in the literature of modern social anal-

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ysis. Fanon sometimes gave way to a messianic hope that the revolution he had joined would "make man victorious everywhere, once and for all," but he did not abuse that hope to justify revolutionary actions on the basis of some ultimate, cosmic significance. He never wallowed in the hate revolutionaries must sometimes feel; his view of the postrevolutionary world was no mere inversion of the compartmentalized, "Manichean" society that had oppressed him.

The point, then, of this discussion of Fanon has been to try to wrest him away from the *terribles simplificateurs* who seek to equate him unconditionally with the advocacy of violence in *The Wretched of the Earth*. It is not possible to say how many of those who claim to follow Fanon actually resemble him in the depth of their inner conflicts, or how many may someday learn to see themselves in Fanon's picture of the irrational style of black antiwhite thought. Fanon's adoption as a spokesman by militant blacks in our country is both a reminder of a painful present and a warning of a troubled future. But in meeting the challenge this poses, we would do well to consider whether, hidden behind the rhetoric of black militancy, there does not remain something of Fanon's hunger "to reach out for the universal."

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A REPORT

Heads and Seekers

Drugs on Campus, Counter-Cultures and American Society

KENNETH KENISTON

Students who use drugs are usually treated by the mass media as an alien wart upon the student body of America. A spate of articles in popular magazines, specials on television, discussions in state legislatures and hearings by congressmen have helped create an image of the young drug user that equates "drug abuse" with moral leprosy and quite possibly with membership in the Mafia. Few subjects arouse feelings as intense and irrational as does the topic of student drug use; in few areas is there greater tendency to distort, to perceive facts selectively, and to view with alarm. Few topics are treated with so much heat and so little light.

Despite growing public agitation, however, we have remarkably little factual information about drugs on campus. Most colleges have not conducted surveys of drug use—or if they have, they have preferred not to publicize the results. Most students who use drugs do not volunteer themselves as psychological research subjects, for the mere possession of marihuana is a felony under federal law. As a result, what is known about the sociology and psychology of student drug users comes largely from that small minority of students who are sufficiently disturbed to seek out professional help. Surrounded with illegality and the taint of moral depravity, drug use on campus remains a largely unexplored area.

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Yet enough information is now available from scattered studies to permit preliminary extrapolation to a coherent picture of the "student drug abuser." In the discussion that follows, I will not be concerned with the psychopharmacology or physical effects of drug use. Rather I will speculate about the meaning of this phenomenon in a variety of overlapping contexts—psychological, social, educational and historical.

To begin to understand youthful drug use, we must start from a series of more specific questions. Who uses drugs? How do we define "drug use"? What are some of the psychological factors involved in drug use? How can we explain the fact that drug use is very common in certain kinds of colleges, but virtually nonexistent in others? If, as widely claimed, student drug use is related in some way to the characteristics of modern American society, what is the nature of the relationship?

Rates and Places

The term "drug" covers a multitude of substances that affect human physiology and functioning. Virtually every American is a routine user of prescribed and unprescribed psychoactive drugs like aspirin, alcohol, sleeping pills or stimulants whose primary intended effect is to alter mood, feeling, or psychological states. Indeed, at the present time, more than seventy percent of all prescriptions written in the United States are for psychoactive compounds—for example, tranquilizers, painkillers and antidepressants. If we include—as we must—ethyl alcohol, caffeine and nicotine among drugs, then the American

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who has never "used" drugs is a statistical freak.

Although drug use itself is not novel in American society, what is novel is the student use of new types of drugs for the sole purpose of altering mood and state of consciousness. Most student drug use involves the hallucinogens—a family of nonaddictive drugs that includes not only marihuana (cannabis) but other hallucinogenic, psychedelic or psychotomimetic drugs like LSD, DMT, STP, psilocibin and mescaline (peyote). Some of these drugs have been widely used since the beginning of recorded history, others are recent discoveries; what is new, then, is their use by a growing segment of American college youth. To be sure, most definitions of "drug abuse" lump together distinct individuals for whom drug use and experimentation have very different meanings. But for a start, let us accept the prevailing definition of "drug user" as anyone who has *ever* tried any one of the hallucinogens, and examine the pattern of use that results from accepting this definition.

Student drug use, defined as use of the hallucinogens, is rapidly increasing. But the widely publicized estimates that one in seven, one in four, or one in two of the seven million college students in America can be considered a "drug abuser" are vastly exaggerated. Even at those few colleges where drug use is most prevalent, surveys arrive at estimates of between five and seventy-five percent of the student body who have "ever used" any of the hallucinogens. These studies, furthermore, tend to have been conducted at select colleges like California at Berkeley, Wisconsin at Madison, Michigan at Ann Arbor, Harvard, Stanford, Yale, Cal. Tech, Princeton, Antioch, Swarthmore, Wesleyan (Connecticut), Goddard and Reed. Approximately three percent of American college students attend these institutions. Among the remaining ninety-seven percent, it already seems clear that drug use is far rarer, and in many instances nonexistent. A recent Gallup Poll arrives at an estimate of five to six percent of college youth who have "ever tried" any hallucinogenic drug. Thus, while student drug use constitutes an important phenomenon, it probably touches directly less than one in ten of the young Americans who attend institutions of higher education.

The public impression of astronomically high rates of drug use in American college youth stems in part from the great visibility of the colleges where drug use is most common. Students of college cultures have found it useful to categorize colleges according to the relative presence or absence of what they term an "intellectual climate." The correlation between "intellectual climate" and rates of drug use is very close. That is, the highest rates are found at small, progressive, liberal arts colleges with a nonvocational orientation, a high faculty-student ratio, high student intellectual caliber as measured by College Boards, close student-faculty relationships, and a great value placed on the academic independence, intellectual interests, and personal freedom of students. At perhaps a dozen or so such colleges, it seems likely that the proportion of students who have ever tried marihuana or some other hallucinogen exceeds fifty percent. But there are more than twenty-two hundred other colleges in the country.

Farther down the list, with regard to both intellectual climate and drug use, are the private university colleges, like Harvard, Stanford, Yale and Chicago, and the major state universities, like Michigan, Wisconsin and California, with a tradition (at least within their Colleges of Arts and Sciences) of intellectual excellence and academic freedom. Included on this list, as well, should be the major technological institutions like Cal. Tech and M.I.T., notable for the extremely high ability of students they recruit. At such colleges, student drug use rates of between ten and fifty percent will be found at present.* Still farther down on the list are other state universities with a lesser reputation

* Regional differences are also important: drug use is higher on the West Coast than on the East Coast. Also, proximity to a metropolitan center probably increases drug use, other things being equal.

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for academic excellence and intellectual or personal freedom. Here one thinks of colleges like Ohio State and the University of Oregon. At such institutions rates of drug use probably vary between five and twenty percent. At the bottom of the list in terms of both student drug use and intellectual climate are those colleges that together enroll the majority of American students—upgraded state teachers colleges, junior colleges, community colleges, normal schools, the smaller religious and denominational colleges, and most Catholic colleges and universities. On such campuses, student drug use rarely exceeds five percent. These are the colleges most notable for their vocational and practical orientation, the absence of serious student intellectual interests, and the presence of strong anti-intellectual student subcultures centered around technical training and/or social activities like sports and fraternities.

Nor are drug users randomly distributed *within* any one institution. At large universities that include a number of separate "schools," drug use is concentrated in the College of Arts and Sciences, the Graduate School, and in the Schools of Drama, Music, Art and Architecture. Rates of drug use are notably lower in such schools as Business Administration, Engineering, Agronomy and Education. Furthermore, within any school or faculty, drug users are most likely to be found in the most intellectual, humanistic and "introspective" fields (for example, music, literature, drama, the arts and psychology); they are likely to be less common in practical, applied, extroverted and "harder" areas like engineering or economics. Indeed, there is evidence from one liberal arts college that students who use drugs are characterized by *higher* grades than those who do not. The demographic evidence suggests a strong relationship between intellectuality and drug use within the college population.

These inferences, however, are open to two different interpretations. On the one hand, we might conclude that colleges with an "intellectual climate" recruit students with special personal characteristics that make them more prone to experiment with drugs. The institution, according to this view, merely acts as a magnet for young men and women who are likely to smoke pot no matter where they go to college. On the other hand, it could be argued that the climate and culture of some colleges actively push students toward drug use regardless of their personal characteristics. If a student attends a college where "everyone" is using drugs, he is more likely to do so himself. Similarly, certain college pressures (for example, relentless pressure for grades) or certain administrative practices (for example, respect for student autonomy) may also increase the likelihood of student drug use. In practice, both these interpretations seem correct: some colleges attract large numbers of potential drug users and then expose them to a climate in which using drugs becomes even more probable. To understand this interaction, we must consider types of drug users, motivations for drug use, and some of the pressures on college students today.

Tasters, Seekers and Heads

A "drug abuser" is often defined as anyone who has ever experimented with any of the hallucinogens—who has ever inhaled marihuana, ever ingested any other hallucinogenic drug, or, in some instances, ever taken a barbiturate to get to sleep or an amphetamine (Benzedrine, Dexedrine) before an examination. If we limit ourselves to the hallucinogens, however, we usually find that up to half of the students listed as "users" turn out to have "used" drugs no more than three times, and to have no plans to continue. To call such students drug "abusers" or even "users" is misleading. It is like applying the epithet "alcoholic" or "drinker" to the college girl who once tasted a sip of beer but didn't like it, or labeling as a "smoker" the adult who at the age of twelve smoked a cigarette behind the barn but was sick and never smoked again. Probably the single largest group called "drug abusers" are in reality *tasters*. Such individuals have no place in a discussion of why students use drugs, since these particular students no longer use them.

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If we eliminate the tasters from the ranks of student drug users, we are left with a contingent of probably less than five percent of the college population. These students have used drugs (usually marihuana) a number of times, and they tell us that they "plan" to continue their experimentation. But even within this group of continuing users there are important distinctions to be made. The largest single group of actual drug users are students who have used drugs a relatively small number of times (for example, have smoked pot less than fifteen times) and who do not use them regularly (for example, not every weekend). Such a pattern of use generally indicates that, despite willingness to continue drug experimentation, the individual has in no way organized his life around it. For these occasional users, drug use is generally a part of a more general pattern of experimentation and search for relevance both within and without the college experience—it is one aspect of a more encompassing effort to find meaning in life. Such students can be termed *seekers,* in that they seek in drug use some way of intensifying experience, expanding awareness, breaking out of deadness and flatness, or overcoming depression.

Finally, there is a relatively small but highly visible group of students who have made drug use a central focus of college life. Such students use drugs often and "regularly"—for example, every weekend—and they often experiment with a variety of different drugs. For such young men and women, drug use is not just an intermittent assist in the pursuit of meaning, but a part of a more general "turned-on" ideology, and a membership card to one of the collegiate versions of the hippie subculture. Such students are generally called *heads* (pot-heads or acid-heads) by their contemporaries; and they are by far the most knowledgeable about the effects, side effects, interactions and meanings of the drugs available to students today.

But even among heads, drug use does not invariably constitute the deeply psychopathological and self-destructive phenomenon it is sometimes said invariably to be. Many such students have sufficient strength of character (and perhaps of physiology) to endure regular experimentation with marihuana (and even with more powerful hallucinogens or amphetamines) without suffering any enduring personal disorganization. Many students who use marihuana routinely do *not* experience the ominous personal deterioration, the "bad trips" or the loss of motivation that is sometimes thought to accompany even casual drug experimentation. To be sure, one of the intended effects of drug use is to produce a *transient* alteration of experience and consciousness; and to those who view this alteration from the outside, it may appear deplorable. Yet a majority of students who have used the hallucinogens report that the experience was enlightening, enjoyable or meaningful. Most students who use marihuana regularly, and many of those who use the more powerful hallucinogens, never appear in clinics or consulting rooms (much less psychiatric hospitals). They "recover" from the drug experience, not obviously the worse for the wear, sometimes proclaiming loudly that they have gained a profound and valuable (if usually ineffable) insight into their own natures or that of the world. Judged by such criteria of mental health as the ability to work, to love and to play, such individuals do not seem especially less "mentally healthy" than before their drug experiences.

A smaller but highly publicized group of "heads," however, suffers serious ill effects from even single experiences with the hallucinogens. Students with serious preexisting psychopathology are most vulnerable. And these same students seem most likely to experiment with drugs under conditions that even experienced drug users consider adverse—intense depression, personal isolation and unpleasant surroundings. In extremely rare instances, marihuana can produce panic states or transient psychotic reactions, and similar reactions to LSD have been reported more often. Perhaps more important than the highly dramatic but usually reversible drug psychosis is the danger of lapsing into some relatively enduring form of personal dis-

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organization—most commonly, a life-style that involves a virtually total and apparently self-destructive immersion in a drug-using "hippie" subculture.

Yet even here, short-term changes and long-range effects need to be distinguished. There are clearly some individuals who "regress" into a drug-using subculture for a period of months and even years, but who eventually reemerge into a productive relationship with their fellow man and with society itself. "Dropping out" into the hippie world seems to be defined, for growing numbers of students, as a way of testing psychological and social limits as a preparation for returning to the world of action and commitment. To be sure, most Americans would argue that there are better ways of testing the relationship of self to society than by entering the hippie subculture for two years. But our evaluation of the "ominous" implications of student drug use must be tempered by an awareness that many of those who "drop out" into the drug-using world eventually slide back into the mainstream. One of the disadvantages of the opprobrium that attends drug use is that labeling drug users "felons" or irredeemable "addicts" may in fact make it virtually impossible for them to return to a productive role in society.

The Question of Motives

Drug use is no different from any other form of human behavior, in that a great variety of distinct motives can cooperate to produce it. The particular weight of each of these motives and the way they are combined differs in each individual. Furthermore, drug use is affected not only by motives and forces *within* the individual, but by what is happening *outside* of him in his interpersonal environment, and in the wider social and political world. Thus, any effort to delineate "types" of motivations that enter into drug use is bound to be an oversimplification. For example, there are many individuals who share common characteristics with drug users but who do not use drugs because drugs are not available on their particular campus. Similarly, there are individuals who have little in common with other drug users, but who nonetheless use drugs.

With these important qualifications, at least two of the more common patterns of motivation in student drug users can be defined. Consider first the "seekers." Occasional but continuing drug users are rarely part of the hippie subculture, but such students do tend to have certain common characteristics. They are generally better-than-average students; they are intellectual and antivocational in their approach to their educations; and they are likely to be uncertain as to their future career plans. Sociologically, they tend to come from upper-middle-class professional and business families. Psychologically, such students are usually intense, introspective and genuinely involved in their academic work, from which they hope to find "solutions" to the problems of life and society. (Often, however, they are disappointed in this hope.) As individuals, they usually have a great capacity for hard work. They are rarely "lazy" or indolent; and, when called upon, they can be orderly, regular and highly organized. They also find it relatively easy to separate ideas from feelings, a fact that helps explain their high grades. They are strongly opposed to the war in Southeast Asia, do not express anger readily, and are often extremely idealistic.

But despite considerable academic success and the prospects of a good graduate school (possibly with a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship thrown in), such students are less seekers after grades or professional expertise than seekers after truth. They are extremely open to the contradictory cross-currents of American culture; they read widely, be it in the theater of the absurd, modern existentialist literature, or the writings of the New Left. They are not in any systematic way "alienated" from American society, but they have not really made their minds up whether it is worth joining, either. Often, their own life-styles and the exertions required to do well in a demanding college make such students feel "out of touch" with themselves. Although to an outside observer they usually appear more thoughtful and "in touch" than their class-

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mates in the School of Engineering or Business Administration, they do not consider themselves to be sentient at all. On the contrary, they are continually struggling to experience the world more intensely, to make themselves capable of greater intimacy and love, to find some "rock bottom" from which they can sally forth to social and interpersonal commitments. Such students characteristically make enormously high demands upon themselves, upon experience and upon life; contrasted with these demands, their current experience is often barren, flat and dull.

Marihuana and the more powerful hallucinogens fit very neatly with the search for experience for such students. On the one hand, they promise a new kind of experience to a young man or woman who is highly experimental. On the other hand, they promise intensity, heightened sentience, intensified artistic perceptiveness, and perhaps even self-understanding. Self-understanding is, of course, a prime goal for such individuals; for they are far more inclined to blame themselves than others for the inadequacies of their lives, and they often deliberately seek through self-analysis to change their personalities.

In students of this type, beginning or increasing drug use is often associated with feelings of flatness, boredom, stagnation and depression. It is surprising how often drug users mention a major loss, depression, or feeling of emptiness in the period preceding intensified drug use. The loss may be a breakup with a girl friend, the realization that one's parents are even more fallible than one had previously known, the blow to intellectual self-esteem that almost invariably accompanies the first midterm grades in the freshman year at a selective college, or the growing sense of confusion and purposelessness that follows abandoning previously cherished vocational goals or religious values. Under such circumstances, if there is pot around, the likelihood of trying it (and continuing to use it) is increased.

The "head" is in many respects different from the "seeker." Drug use occupies a more central place in the head's life and is almost always accompanied by disengagement from ordinary social expectations, by intense and often morbid self-exploration, and by a "turned-on" ideology profoundly hostile to the careerist, materialistic and success-oriented goals of middle-class American society. Almost invariably, then, the head is a member of a drug-using subculture, in which he finds an identity that enables him to drop temporarily out of the Establishment America from which he comes and toward which he was headed. For most young men and women, of course, membership in the hippie subculture lasts a summer, a term, a year, or possibly longer, but is followed by a gradual reentry into the System. One student of drug-using college dropouts estimates that they stay in the hippie world an average of a year and a half. After this, most return to their families in the suburbs (average parental income: $15,000 a year) and usually to the highly academic colleges from which they dropped out. Only those with unmistakable artistic talent and those with major psychiatric problems (or both) are likely to remain longer.

Unlike most seekers, heads are genuinely alienated from American society. Their defining characteristic is their generalized rejection of prevalent American values, which they criticize largely on cultural and humanistic grounds. American society is trashy, cheap and commercial; it "dehumanizes" its members; its values of success, materialism, monetary accomplishment and achievement undercut more important spiritual values. Such students rarely stay involved for long in the political and social causes that agitate many of their activist classmates. For alienated students, the basic societal problem is not so much political as aesthetic. Rejecting middle-class values, heads repudiate as well those conventional values and rules that deem experimentation with drugs illicit. For heads, the goal is to find a way out of the "air-conditioned nightmare" of American society. What matters is the interior world, and, in the exploration of that world, drugs play a major role.

A second characteristic of many heads is

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a more or less intense feeling of estrangement from their own experience. Such students are highly aware of the masks, facades and defenses people erect to protect themselves; they are critical of the social "games" and "role-playing" they see around them. They object to these games not only in others, but even more strongly in themselves. As a result, they feel compelled to root out any "defense" that might prevent awareness of inner life; self-deception, lack of self-awareness or "phoniness" are cardinal sins. They have, moreover, a conscious ethic of love, expressed in a continual struggle for "meaningful relationships"—direct, honest and open encounters with others. This ethic is sincerely felt, but it is often difficult for the alienated to achieve in practice. Thus, perhaps the deepest guilts in such individuals spring from their internal impediments to genuineness, directness and open communication with others. As one student said, "For me, sin equals hang-up."

Despite their efforts to make contact with their "real selves" and to have "meaningful relationships" with others, alienated students often feel unusually separated from both self and others. They experience themselves as separated from others by a gray opaque filter, by invisible screens and curtains, by protective shells and crusts that prevent them from the fullness of experience. They recriminate themselves for their lack of expressiveness, spontaneity and contact. One such student described human relations as being like people trying to touch each other through airtight space suits. Another talked of a wax that was poured over his experience, preventing him from rapport with the world. Possessed of an unusually strong desire for intense experience, but also unusually full of feelings of estrangement, such students find drugs that promise to heighten experience a tempting way out of the shell.

A third frequent characteristic of alienated students is a fantasy of fusion and merger, which contrasts sharply with their current feelings of estrangement. Many have a semiconscious concept of almost mystical union with nature, with their own inner lives, or with other people—of communication that requires no words, of the kind of oneness with nature, people, or the world that has always characterized intense religious experience. For a student with unusual impatience with the boundaries that separate the self from the not-self, the powerful hallucinogens are especially attractive, for they can profoundly alter the boundaries of body and self. This change in boundaries is by no means always pleasant, and one of the most common sources of panic during drug experiences is the feeling of being "trapped" in an isolated, barricaded subjectivity. But at other times, the hallucinogens *do* produce feelings of being in unusually direct contact, even fusion, with others.

On several grounds, then, the alienated student is strongly attracted by drugs and by the hippie world. Arguments against drug use based on traditional American values carry little weight for him; on the contrary, he takes great pleasure in violating these "middle-class" norms. His feelings of estrangement from his own experience lead him to attempt to break through the boundaries, shells, walls, filters and barriers that separate him from the world. And his fantasy of fusion disposes him to seek out chemical instruments to increase his "oneness" with others. For a student who is young, alienated and anticonventional, drug use is primarily a way of searching for meaning via the chemical intensification of personal experience.

In a broader developmental context, too, immersion in the drug-using hippie subculture is generally a part of a phase of disengagement from American society. Confronted with a society whose rules and values he profoundly distrusts, the head seeks in the counter-culture of hippiedom a respite, a moratorium, or an escape from pressures and demands he does not want to confront. Yet merely to note the important element of withdrawal in the hippie's use of drugs may be to ignore the more important developmental meaning of drug use for the hippie. However ill-advised society may consider his choice of methods, the hippie is often unconsciously searching

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for a way to engage himself with himself and with others. And however "regressive" or "self-destructive" it may appear to some for a young man to "drop out" of American society, the hippie subculture often proves a rest-and-recovery area, or even a staging area, from which unusually sensitive, talented and/or disturbed individuals take stock of themselves, explore their inner lives and their relationships with a small group of other people, and sometimes *return* to the established society. It seems likely that most hippies will follow this path.

There are, however, a few heads for whom drug use is both a symptom of and a trigger for serious psychopathology. In some cases, drug use clearly accelerates a downhill course upon which the individual is already embarked; in other cases, an overwhelmingly bad trip may topple a student whose previous equilibrium was fragile. Thus, drug use may really be a contributing factor to a picture of psychopathology. Indeed, some of those who are most compulsively drawn to chronic drug use are the same people who can least tolerate it. Already confused and precarious, they are unable to bear the induced alterations of consciousness produced by the hallucinogens, and may move steadily or suddenly downhill.

The Pressure for Academic Performance

Some of the association between type of college and rate of drug use clearly results from the fact that highly "intellectual" colleges selectively attract students with a particular outlook and psychology. This process of attraction is complex. Admission policies that preferentially admit applicants with "serious intellectual interests" promote the process of selective recruitment. But even at colleges that admit almost all applicants, the power of the college image alone suffices to channel into a relatively few colleges a great many students with psychological characteristics that incline them to experiment with drugs. The image of the intellectual college acts as a magnet for students like the "seeker" and the "head"; for "intellectual" or "alienated" high school students, certain colleges promise an ingathering of kindred spirits. Conversely, the less intellectual, unalienated, unintrospective and nonexperimental student is generally attracted to less "intellectual" colleges.

But psychological factors will only take us part way to understanding student drug use. Knowing what college a student attends is often a more accurate index of whether he has used drugs than is exploring his conscious and unconscious motives. The probability of drug use is a product of an interaction of individual psychology, institutional climate and broader social setting. To understand what helps create a climate of opinion that is favorable to drug experimentation, we must examine the pressures that impinge upon students at intellectual colleges.

It is noteworthy that colleges where drug use is most common are usually "high pressure" colleges. Typically, a great majority of undergraduates are preparing themselves for professional careers that require advanced graduate training: usually, more than seventy-five percent of graduates plan to continue their educations after the B.A. Furthermore, the magnetism of the college image and the fine screen of the admissions office almost always yield entering freshmen who have extremely high test scores and records of outstanding academic achievement in secondary school. To be sure, many of the most "intellectual" colleges make systematic efforts to mitigate these pressures by down-playing grades, by work-study programs, and so on. But despite the efforts of the college, students themselves are likely to *feel* pressured, both by their own desire to excel intellectually, and by the entrance requirements of graduate schools. And the congregation within such "intellectual" colleges of large numbers of intellectually able, competitive students helps generate an atmosphere that makes intense intellectual interests, outstanding academic performance, and approval by faculty, scholarship boards, *et cetera,* an important standard of personal worth and community recognition.

As a result, the more intellectual col-

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leges are noteworthy for their *lack* of emphasis on the traditional American college pastimes of fun, fraternities and football. "Play" and social life are generally downgraded. Students and faculty members agree that the purpose of college is to get a liberal education, not to improve one's social skills, not to make influential friends for later life, and not to enjoy oneself in a frivolous way. Intellectual commitment and cognitive talent are highly rewarded, while these colleges frown on "collegiate" pranks and "childish" displays of adolescent high spirits. What is valued at such colleges (and they increasingly set the tone for American higher education at large) is the ability to delay, postpone and defer immediate gratification in the interest of acquiring a liberal education. "Serious" interests—be they intellectual, artistic or political—are enjoined by a united student-faculty culture.

Such "elite" colleges present relatively few countervailing pressures to become more relaxed, joyous, interpersonally skilled, feeling, courageous, or physically expressive. Throughout the "intellectual" sector of American higher education, the most intense pressures are highly cognitive, narrowly academic, and often quantitative. The tangible rewards of American higher education—scholarships, admission to "good" graduate schools, remunerative fellowships and community acclaim—go for a rather narrow kind of cognitive functioning that leads to writing good final examinations, constructing good term papers, being good at multiple choice tests, and excelling on Graduate Record Examinations. Most of the students who attend these colleges are headed toward a professional world that requires the same kind of abstractive intelligence. Thus, it is the outstanding graduates of such colleges who go on to equally outstanding graduate schools, and eventually to outstanding appointments in outstanding hospitals, scientific laboratories, business corporations, and university faculties.

Over the past two decades, the movement toward "intellectuality" in American colleges has been steady and marked. Throughout American higher education, cognitive, intellectual and preprofessional outlooks are on the rise, while such traditional American student pastimes as panty raids, popularity contests, campus politics and fraternity rushing are on a steady decline. The highly intellectual preprofessional student has less time and less motivation for the college pranks of his parents' generation. To survive and prosper in tomorrow's technological world, he must work terribly hard in college in order to be "really good in his field." He must perform well academically, and without "mistakes" that would lower his grade average. He must postpone a whole gamut of emotional satisfactions until he is older. A bad course, a bad year, or even taking a year off may mean not getting into graduate school or—worse—getting drafted.

There is much to be said for these pressures for intellectual performance, just as there is much that is admirable about those who possess academic skills. Today's college students at selective institutions are an unusually serious, well-informed, honest and morally concerned group. While they scorn the round of fun and frivolity that dominated the lives of previous college generations, they in fact care deeply about each other, and a growing number are intensely concerned with the social and political future of their world. Yet in describing the self-generated and educationally-generated pressures upon them, I have used the word "performance" advisedly. "Performance" suggests alien activity, acting on a stage in order to impress others, a role played for the benefit of the audience. And to growing numbers of such students, intellectual performance is increasingly seen as a kind of "role-playing" of the worst sort. Indeed, one source of the growing demand for "relevance" and "student power" is this widely shared feeling that much academic and intellectual activity is somehow "alien" to the "real" interests and concerns of the student.

And it is indeed true that although the systematic quest for cognitive competence and academic performance occupies most of the time and effort of the preprofessional student at today's selective colleges, this

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quest does little to inform students about life's purposes and joys. One of the peculiar characteristics of academic performance is that even when performance is impeccable, most of the other "really important" questions remain unanswered: What is life all about? What really matters? What do I stand for? Why do I bother? How much do I stand for? What is relevant, meaningful and important? What is meaningless, valueless and false? For many students, then, the pursuit of academic competence must be supplemented by a more private, less academic, noncurricular quest for the meaning of life. When large numbers of students perceive their academic efforts as irrelevant to the really important "existential" and "ultimate" questions, then the way is open for a more private search for meaning, significance and relevance. Together, they have begun to create an informal shared culture that counters and complements the academic professionalism of elite American colleges.

The Experiential Counter-Culture

The "better" American colleges rarely attempt to provide students with neatly packaged answers to their existential questions. To be sure, the most demanding colleges make systematic efforts to provoke undergraduates to challenge previous beliefs and to abandon unexamined dogmas. But they expect students to arrive at individual solutions to the riddles of life, all the while occupying themselves with getting good grades and getting ahead in the academic world. The college's message is often highly paradoxical: "Ruthlessly discard previous convictions and values; don't look to us for answers; most of your questions are sophomoric, in any case."

To the most sophisticated undergraduates, the traditional avenues to significance seem irrelevant, exhausted, insincere or superficial. Traditional religious faith and the great political ideologies arouse relatively little interest among today's determinedly anti-ideological undergraduates. Nor does success within the "American way of life" constitute an answer to life's riddles for most students. There was a day when the quest for campus popularity seemed to many undergraduates but a reflection of a broader life philosophy of making friends, influencing people, and developing social skills. But today, "popularity" has become a dirty word. Nor does "getting ahead in the world" provide an answer for intellectual students, most of whom start out already ahead in the world —the children of well-educated and well-situated middle-class parents. For these students, the old American dream of giving one's children "a better chance" makes little sense: they find it pointless to struggle for greater affluence when they already have more than enough. They are more worried about how to live with what they already have.

As the traditional avenues to meaning have dried up, and as academic performance itself seems increasingly irrelevant to the major existential concerns of students, a new informal student subculture has begun to emerge. Although not opposed to the life of the mind, this subculture is anti-academic. Although students who participate in it are publicly headed for professional careers, they privately focus on experience in the present rather than on long-range goals. Theirs is an informal *experiential counter-culture,* which complements the formal culture of the academically-oriented college. Central to this counter-culture is a focus on the present—on today, on the here and now. At one level, intellectual college students are required to defer enjoyment for a distant future in their academic and preprofessional work. But, informally, they emphasize immediate pleasure and experience. While society at large expects from them a reverence for the traditions of the past and a respect for traditional institutions, they stress in their own subcultures activity and receptivity in the present. Such future-oriented qualities as control, planning, waiting, saving and postponing are little honored in the student subculture; nor are past-oriented qualities like revering, recalling, remembering and respecting much emphasized. In contrast, the experiential subculture stresses genuineness, adventure,

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spontaneity, sentience and experimentation. Since the past is seen as irrelevant (or "exhausted") and since the future seems profoundly uncertain, the real meaning of life must be found within present experience—even as one worries about the Graduate Record Examinations.

The experiential counter-culture has many variants, at least some of which are visible on almost every major American campus. One variant is what is sometimes called "student existentialism." At the more sophisticated campuses, this outlook is manifest in an intense interest in existential writers, in the theater of the absurd, and in philosophers and psychologists who stress "existential" concepts. But even at less sophisticated colleges, a similar focus is apparent in student emphasis on simple human commitments as contrasted with absolute values, in a "situation ethic" that questions the possibility of long-range value commitments, and by a pervasively high estimation of sincerity, authenticity and directness. Student existentialism is humanistic rather than religious, and its most immediate goals are love, immediacy, empathy, "encounter" with one's fellow man. Thus, in the counter-culture, what matters most is interpersonal honesty, "really being yourself" and a special kind of open and disinterested genuineness. What is most unacceptable is fraudulence, exploitation, "role-playing," artificiality, hypocrisy and "playing games."

Along with the focus on the present and on "existential" values goes a very great tolerance for experimentation. Youth is increasingly defined (by youth itself) as a time for exploration, trial and error, and deliberate efforts to enlarge, change or expand personality. Experimentation in the interest of deliberate self-change is seen as essential to pursuit of meaning. Convinced that meaning is not found but created, members of the counter-culture consider their own personalities the prime vehicles for the creation of significance. Since significance emerges from the self, it is only by transforming the self that significance can be achieved. In a kind of deliberate, self-conscious and intentional identity-formation, apparently unconnected activities and experiences find their rationale. Self-exploration, psychotherapy, sexual experimentation, travel, "encounter groups," a reverence for nature, and "sensitivity training" are tools in the pursuit of meaning—along with drug use.

The high rates of drug use at the more intellectual and academically demanding colleges are therefore not to be explained solely by the presence at such colleges of students of the same psychological type—although this fact is important. In addition, the more intellectual colleges tend to impose upon students an unusually strong set of pressures for academic and intellectual performance: they require high cognitive ability, a preprofessional orientation, and a postponement of immediate gratifications without offering much in return by way of fun or answers to life's riddles. In such an environment, students have spontaneously created a counter-culture, which, while not explicitly opposed to academic pursuits, complements them with a focus on the present, on "existential" values, on personal experimentation, and on deliberate self-transformation as a way of creating meaning. Participation in this counter-culture provides a powerful support for efforts to explore oneself, to intensify relationships with other people, to change the quality and content of consciousness. It provides a sanctioning context for drug use as one of the pathways of changing the self so as to create meaning in the world.

Drugs as a Commentary on Society

It is widely feared that student drug use is a commentary upon American society; words like degeneracy, addiction, thrill-seeking and irresponsibility are eventually introduced into most popular discussions of student drug use. So, too, student drug use is said to be related to the excessive permissiveness of parents, to the laxness of adult standards, to breaches in law enforcement, to disrespect for law and order, and to an impending breakdown of our social fabric.

Although these particular interpretations of the social implications of drug use are

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incorrect, drug use *is* importantly influenced by social, political and historical factors. Those students who lust after significance or reject the prevalent values of American society are in fact reacting to and within a societal context. The sense of being locked-off and enclosed in an impermeable shell is related not only to individual psychological states like depression, but to broader cultural phenomena. And the fact that a considerable number of the most able students have become convinced that significance and relevant experience are largely to be found within their own skulls is indirectly related to their perception of the other possibilities for fulfillment in the social and political world. In a variety of ways, then, student drug use is a commentary on American society, although a different kind of commentary than most discussions of youthful "thrill-seeking" would lead us to believe.

To single out a small number of social changes as especially relevant to understanding student drug use is to make a highly arbitrary decision. A variety of factors, including rapid social change, the unprecedented possibilities for total destruction in the modern world, the prevalence of violence both domestic and international, the high degree of specialization and bureaucratization of American life, and a host of others are relevant to creating the context of values and expectations within which drug use has become increasingly legitimate. But of all the factors that could be discussed, three seem particularly relevant: first, the effect of modern communications and transportation in producing an overwhelming inundation of experience, which I will term *stimulus flooding;* second, the effect of *automatic affluence* in changing the values and outlooks of the young; third, the importance of recent social and historical events in producing a kind of *social and political disenchantment* that leads many students to seek salvation through withdrawal and inner life rather than through engagement and societal involvement.

STIMULUS FLOODING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL NUMBING. Every society subjects its members to pressures and demands that they simply take for granted. Such pressures are woven into the fabric of social existence, are assumed to be a natural part of life, and become the object of automatic accommodation. These accommodations are rarely examined, yet they may profoundly alter the quality of human experience. Such is the case with the quantity, variety and intensity of external stimulation, imagery and excitation to which most Americans are subjected. As Robert J. Lifton has pointed out, modern man in advanced societies is subjected to a flood of unpredictable stimulation of the most varied kinds; by newspapers, television, radio and rapid travel, he continually exposes himself to novel and unanticipatable experience. This stimulus inundation, in turn, produces a self-protective reaction which, following Lifton, we can term psychic numbing.

Most individuals in most societies have at some point in their lives had the experience of being so overcome by external stimulation and internal feelings that they gradually find themselves growing numb and unfeeling. Medical students commonly report that after their first, often intense reactions to the cadaver, they simply "stop feeling anything" with regard to the object of their dissection. And we have all had the experience of listening to so much good music, seeing so many fine paintings, being so overwhelmed by excellent cooking that we find ourselves simply unable to respond further. Similarly, at moments of extreme psychic pain and anguish, most individuals "go numb," no longer perceiving the full implications of a catastrophic situation or no longer experiencing the full range of their own feelings. This lowered responsiveness, this psychological numbing, seems causally related to the variety, persistence and intensity of stimulation and emotion.

Most Americans have had the experience of returning to urban life from a calm and pastoral setting. Initially, we respond by being virtually deluged with the clamor of people, sights, sounds, images and colors that demand our attention and response. The beauty and the ugliness of the landscape continually strike us; each of the

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millions of faces in our great cities has written on it the tragicomic record of a unique life history; each sound evokes a resonant chord within us. Such periods, however, tend to be transient and fleeting; and they usually give way to a sense of numbness, of nonresponsiveness, and of profound inattention to the very stimuli that earlier evoked so much in us. We settle in; we do not notice any more.

This psychological numbing operates at a great variety of levels for modern man. Our experience, from childhood onward, with the constantly flickering images and sounds of television, films, radio, newspapers, paperbacks, neon signs, advertisements and sound trucks numbs us to the sights and sounds of our civilization. Our continual exposure to a vast variety of ideologies, value systems, philosophies, political creeds, superstitions, religions and faiths numbs us to the unique claims to validity and the special spiritual and intellectual values of each one: we move among values and ideologies as in a two-dimensional landscape. Similarly, the availability to us in novels, films, television, theater and opera of moments of high passion, tragedy, joy, exaltation and sadness often ends by numbing us to our own feelings and the feelings of others.

Modern men thus confront the difficult problem of keeping "stimulation" from without to a manageable level, while also protecting themselves against being overwhelmed by their own inner responses to the stimuli from the outer world. Defenses or barriers against both external and internal stimulation are, of course, essential in order for us to preserve our intactness and integrity as personalities. From earliest childhood, children develop thresholds of responsiveness and barriers against stimulation in order to protect themselves against being overwhelmed by inner or outer excitement. Similarly, in adulthood, comparable barriers, thresholds and defenses are necessary, especially when we find ourselves in situations of intense stimulation.

A problem arises, however, if the barriers we erect to protect ourselves from the clamors of the inner and outer world prove harder and less permeable than we had originally wanted. In at least a minority of Americans, the normal capacity to defend oneself against undue stimulation and inner excitation is exaggerated and automatized, so that it not only protects, but walls off the individual from inner and outer experience. In such individuals, there develops an acute sense of being trapped in their own shells, unable to break through their defenses to make "contact" with experience or with other people, a sense of being excessively armored, separated from their own activities as by an invisible screen, estranged from their own feelings and from potentially emotion-arousing experiences in the world. Most of us have had some inkling of this feeling of inner deadness and outer flatness, especially in times of great fatigue, letdown, or depression. The world seems cold and two-dimensional; food and life have lost their savor; our activities are merely "going through the motions," our experiences lack vividness, three-dimensionality, and intensity. Above all, we feel trapped or shut in our own subjectivity.

The continual flooding of stimulation to which modern men are subjected is thus related not only to the psychological conditions and institutional pressures that help create the feelings of numbness, but, indirectly, to the nature of perception and experience in an advanced technological society. One problem every modern American faces is how to avoid becoming entrapped in the protective shell he must construct to defend himself against being overwhelmed by stimulation. And the use of drugs, especially in the context of the experiential counter-culture, becomes more attractive to youth precisely because the drugs preferred by students often have the effect of dissipating, blurring, or breaking down the boundaries of individual selfhood and personality.

AUTOMATIC AFFLUENCE. No society in world history has ever provided its citizens with the automatic abundance that our society provides to a majority of Americans. In over ten years of interviewing students from middle-class and upper-middle-class backgrounds, I have yet to find one who was worried about finding a job, and have

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met relatively few who were worried about finding a *good* job. Whatever their levels of aspiration, today's advantaged youth rarely think in terms of getting ahead in the world, acquiring increasing status, or struggling to "succeed." These goals, both relevant and important to their parents (products of the 1920's and the Great Depression), are largely irrelevant to today's youth. Like youth in every era, they turn from the successes of the past to the problems of the present and future. Thus, paradoxically, although they live in a society more affluent than any before it, they are far more outraged at poverty, injustice, inequality, exploitation and cruelty than were their parents, who lived in a more impoverished society. Indeed, one of the central demands of today's politically active youth is that everyone have the benefits which they themselves have always taken for granted.

One of the undeniable benefits of affluence is that it brings increased opportunities for enjoyment and leisure, and destroys the need to devote oneself to a life of unrelenting toil in order to prosper. Affluence permits a de-emphasis of hard work, self-control and renunciation, and makes possible the development of new cultures of leisure. As work, success and achievement decline in relative importance, new values are beginning to replace them, and new patterns of consumption are beginning already to reflect these new values. As "getting ahead in the world" no longer suffices to define the meaning of life, today's advantaged students turn increasingly to explore *other* meanings of life.

Two rather different alternatives have so far been tried. The first is the solution of the political activist, who remains primarily concerned with the fact that his own affluence and freedom have not been extended to all. Within America, his concern is with the poor, the deprived, the excluded and the disadvantaged. Abroad, he focuses on the many failures of American foreign policy, failures that in his eyes involve a catastrophic gap between the values of a democratic society and the foreign policies that purportedly implement them. The activist would have us support rather than oppose movements of national liberation, and use our affluence not in military engagements but in programs of assistance to the developing nations. The activist is most likely to accept the traditional values of American society, especially those emphasizing justice, equality, opportunity and freedom, and to insist that these values be more thoroughly practiced.

The second response to the question, "What lies beyond affluence?," while not incompatible with the first, looks in a different area for an answer. This second response turns to a more fundamental critique of the premises and assumptions upon which technological America has been based. Instead of equality, it champions diversity; instead of pressing for the extension of affluence, it questions the meaning of affluence. Associated with a long tradition of romantic criticism of industrial and postindustrial society, this response points to the price of affluence—dehumanization, professionalization, bureaucracy, a loss of power over society, the absence of a sense of small scale, and the erosion of traditional community. For the romantic critic of American society, fulfillment and personal wholeness are more important than abundance and achievement. The life of the affluent middle class in America is seen as empty, spiritually impoverished, driven and neurotic; the vaguely defined alternative involves expressiveness, self-knowledge, involvement with the small group of others, the fulfillment of nonmaterial artistic, spiritual and psychological needs. "Self-actualization" is the goal; "let each man do his thing" is the motto.

Automatic affluence, then, inevitably means that many of those who experience abundance as routine, attempt to create goals beyond affluence. These goals may involve a reform of the world so as to extend affluence to all, or a critique of the technological assumptions upon which affluence itself was based. Insofar as the individual's main effort is to extend affluence, he is relatively immune to the appeals of the experiential, drug-using world, for his energies are oriented toward changing the world rather than himself. But insofar as his primary focus is antitechnological—

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upon self-fulfillment, personal change, and spiritual or humanistic fulfillment—this focus is highly consistent with the use of drugs. For drug use among college students is closely related to the effort to change oneself, to become more creative, to be more expressive, more emotionally open and more genuinely in contact with the world. And the use of drugs is associated with a questioning or rejection of the traditional success ethic of American life, and with a search for new styles of living more oriented to leisure, to intimate personal relationships, and to spiritual expression. Thus, affluence indirectly produces a mood among some of its recipients that makes them receptive to drug use and other forms of personal experimentation.

SOCIO-POLITICAL DISENCHANTMENT. In juxtaposing two answers to the quest for meaning beyond abundance, I have implied a certain tension between them. It is not accidental that full-time and committed political activists are rarely intensive drug users; it is also important that the full-time denizens of the drug-using hippie subculture are rarely capable of sustained political activity. Sustained engagement in an effort to change the world is rarely compatible with the kind of self-absorption and inwardness that results from intensive and regular drug use; conversely, however strongly the committed drug user may feel about the inequities of American society, his primary efforts are usually directed toward self-change, rather than changing the world around him. Although some individuals alternate at different times in their lives between activism and alienation, it is very difficult to be an active social reformer and a "head" at the same time.

This argument suggests that disenchantment with the possibilities of meaningful social action is related to the development of an outlook conducive to drug use. To trace student drug use directly to such factors as racial injustices or the war in Vietnam would, of course, be a major oversimplification. But disenchantment with meaningful and honorable political activity creates a general climate of opinion that *is*, in turn, favorable to drug use. Specifically, the change in student attitudes toward political life and social reform since the assassination of President Kennedy seems importantly connected to the rise of drug use.

The influence of Kennedy upon the attitudes of youth is often exaggerated or stated in an oversimplified way. Many of the young, of course, disliked Kennedy, as did many of their parents. Furthermore, most of those who admired Kennedy personally had no intention whatsoever of entering public life. Kennedy's impact on the attitudes of youth was indirect: he and the group around him symbolized the conviction that it was possible for young, idealistic and intelligent men and women to enter the political world and to "make a difference." Such Kennedy ventures as the Peace Corps further provided an outlet—and more importantly a symbol—for the idealistic energies of activist youth. Although Kennedy himself in fact rarely listened to the advice of students, such symbolic Kennedy acts as pots of coffee for peace marchers in front of the White House indicated at least an awareness of the opinion of the dedicated young.

The image of political life conveyed by the Johnson Administration, especially from 1966 to late 1968, was vastly different. Not only have older views of politics as a form of horse trading, "compromising," and "wheeling and dealing" been reinstated, but large numbers of American college students have come to associate political involvement with gross immorality and even with genocide. In this context, such revelations as that of covert C.I.A. funding of liberal student organizations like the National Students Association have the effect of convincing many intelligent and idealistic youth that politics—and, by extension, efforts to work to change the System from within—are dishonorable or pointless occupations.

The demise of the Civil Rights Movement and the collapse of the War on Poverty have also helped change the climate of opinion about political reform. In the early 1960's, the Civil Rights Movement was the chief catalyst for the rising tide of student political involvement. Sit-ins, Freedom Rides, the work of S.N.C.C. and other

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groups in the Deep South helped convince students that their efforts at social change would be honored, recognized and responded to by the society at large. Students in the early 1960's saw themselves not so much in opposition to the policies of the nation as in the vanguard of these policies; and the passage of major Civil Rights legislation in 1964, followed by the promise of a major "War on Poverty," gave support to this conviction. Thus there arose a hope that "American society would crash through" in remedying its own inequities. This hope had a widespread impact, not only upon that small minority of students who were actively involved in civil rights work, but upon others who were indirectly encouraged to plan careers of responsible social involvement.

But the events of subsequent years have altered this initial hope. The "white backlash" has made legislators extremely reluctant to assist the Negro revolution. The war in Vietnam drained funds away from domestic programs just when federal assistance was needed most. The student Civil Rights Movement for its part discovered that legal reforms exposed more clearly the depths of the problem of black Americans, and pointed toward more far-reaching psychological, social and economic changes that were more difficult to legislate from Washington. The War on Poverty collapsed into a small skirmish. Equally important, the rising militancy of black radicals has pushed white students out of organizations like S.N.C.C. and CORE with the demand, "Go home and organize your own people." Lacking national support, and "rejected" by their former black allies, white activists have increasingly despaired of working within the System, have become more radical, and are talking more militantly about "changing the System."

The changing image of political involvement has had two effects. On the one hand, it has contributed to the "radicalization" of those individuals who have remained activists: especially now among such students, disaffection with the established system is at a high that has not been reached in this country since the 1930's. But equally important, the revitalized image of the political process as dishonest, reprehensible, immoral and unresponsive to both the ideals of America and the rights of the deprived has created a climate in which it is more and more possible to argue that salvation—if it can be found at all—must be found within the self or the counter-community, rather than within the wider society. Given this belief, the individual in search of meaningful engagement with the world must either create new political institutions (as stressed by the rhetoric of the New Left), or else abandon political struggle altogether in a search for meaning within small groups of other disaffected people. It is in these latter groups that drug use is most common. If the world outside is corrupt, dehumanized, violent and immoral, the world within—the almost infinitely malleable world of perception, sensation, communication and consciousness—seems more controllable, more immediate, less corrupting, and ofttimes more pleasant. To be sure, there is a price to be paid for exclusive involvement in the interior world, but, for many young Americans, there simply seems to be no alternative.

Political and historical events do not have a direct, one-to-one relationship with drug use: the war in Vietnam does not *cause* students to smoke marihuana or experiment with LSD. But the political climate of the past few years has created a negative view of the possibility of meaningful involvement within the established institutions of the society, at the same time that it has convinced many students that society is in desperate need of reform. This climate of opinion in turn contributes to the assumption that if meaning, excitement and dignity are to be found in the world, they must be found within one's own cranium. Drug use can indeed be a kind of cop-out, not from perversity or laziness, but simply because there seems to be no other alternative. Student drug use is indeed a commentary upon American society, but it is above all an indirect criticism of our society's inability to offer the young exciting, honorable and effective ways of using their intelligence and idealism to reform our society.

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The Bear

WILLIAM HEYEN

I was the first of us, leaving a downtown bar
one spring dusk, to see the bear.
I blamed it on beer.

It crossed the street to my side, deeper black
than the shut shops or near dark.
I tried to blink it back.

It passed an arm's length away. I stood straight
as a parking meter, and could scent
its long-slept lust.

I was the first of us to see the bear, the first to follow
its musky, rutting smell like a shadow
to its spring lair.

The beast's eyes glowed yellow on the stairs.
It rose to two legs and ripped its claws
across her shut door.

She led me quickly across her room, and bade
the enraged bear stand guard
beside her bed.

She pulled me down, and all the while
I felt its hot, fragrant muzzle,
until I heard her call

another to step inside the cage, the first to follow.
Later, the magic bear slept. As though
it could ever sleep another winter.

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Reopening the Case of Wagner

HARVEY GROSS

Richard Wagner remains, if estimated only in regard to his value for Germany and German culture, a large question mark: perhaps a German calamity, in any case a destiny . . .

—*Nietzsche,* The Will to Power

Nietzsche urged that men assent to their destiny; *amor fati* was the strange device woven into Zarathustra's battle flag. But he could not accept Wagner as a destiny without the most violent protests. With dialectical fury he subjected Wagner to one of the most bitterly searching analyses one supremely great mind ever devoted to another. He never denied the overwhelming accomplishment and influence of Wagner's work: he cried, "*Other* musicians don't count compared to Wagner." He never could forget that Wagner had been his cherished friend, the only authentic genius he had known and loved. What drove Nietzsche away from Bayreuth with indigestion and migraine was his belief that Wagner, as an aesthetic and moral destiny, summed up every dangerous, corrupting aspect of the nineteenth century. To Nietzsche Wagner *was* the nineteenth century in all its bewildering contradictions: its devotion to the highest-minded ideologies and its brutal exploitation of the powerless; its commitment to individual freedom and its surging, individual annihilating nationalism; its shining faith in progress and its black despair at the cruel evolutionary struggle for survival. Nietzsche maintained that one understood modernity if one understood Wagner.

Doubtless Nietzsche understood Wagner; doubtless he overreacted to both Wagner as a dominating personality and the supposed evil influences of Wagner's art. But since those final months of 1888, when Nietzsche was frantically concerned with explaining his position contra Wagner, we have witnessed vindication of Nietzsche's warning that Wagner was a calamitous destiny for Germany—and for the world. Nietzsche's doubts and demurrers are still central issues; indeed, after the *Nazizeit,* Wagner is more than an aspect of nineteenth-century tendencies toward aesthetic decadence and moral nihilism. He has become entangled in that radical evil that nearly destroyed the modern world. While Hitler waited in his *Führerbunker* under the Reich Chancellory, the Berlin Philharmonic played, at its final concert before the Allied armies entered Berlin, Siegfried's Funeral Music from *Die Götterdämmerung.** As a gesture, such a performance smacks of both empty heroics

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* See Cornelius Ryan, *The Last Battle* (New York, 1966), pp. 175, 212, 375, 386-87. It is also possible that Hitler had with him in the bunker the autograph scores of *Rienzi, Rheingold, Die Walküre* and *Siegfried.* The *Wagner-Gesamtausgabe* (Munich) has requested any information regarding the whereabouts of these scores which, "at the end of the war were said to be in the bunker under the Reich Chancellory."

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and ironic self-pity; it also indicates how historical reality contrived to overtake art —and how the art of Richard Wagner was the only appropriate comment on a situation Wagner's potent mixture of music and mythology, in ways ambiguous and compelling, helped bring about.

A recent biography by Robert W. Gutman, *Richard Wagner: The Man, His Mind, and His Music,* offers a new assessment of Wagner and his ideological heritage. It is the first biography in English that takes seriously the extensive ramifications of Nietzsche's critique; consequently, the picture of Wagner that emerges is vastly different from the Wagner of Ernest Newman's monumental four-volume *Life.* Gutman erects no monument; rather, he undertakes the all-but-impossible task of writing a convincing biography of a man with whom he cannot sympathize. The evidence is clear, even in Newman's admiring *Life,* that Wagner, on his best behavior, was a colossal egoist; at his worst, a dangerously psychopathic personality. Newman does not gloss over Wagner's defects of character; he is scrupulously honest in reporting Wagner's obsessions and bigotries. But for Newman Wagner's virulent anti-Semitism and belief in Aryan racial superiority were, if not exactly the forgiveable quirks of genius, hardly central concerns. Newman saw Wagner as an artist-hero: a Siegfried beset on every side by miscomprehending dragons and treacherous Hagens and hence entitled to hold irrational views. Newman treats the Nietzsche-Wagner relationship from the point of view of an orthodox Wagnerian; he does not allow that Nietzsche's revulsion from Wagnerism and the Bayreuth cult was based on anything more than a weak stomach and a professor's ignorance of human nature. Newman draws back in horror at the suggestion that Wagner and Nazism were in any way connected: the most he will concede is that ". . . Adolf Hitler, in his own foolish way, is a Wagner-enthusiast."

Gutman comes to Wagner and ideological Wagnerism (which Newman does not undertake to treat) unblinded by the radiance of Wagner's artistic achievements. He has not the nineteenth-century faith that transcendent genius must be rooted in superiority of character and lofty ethics. In Gutman's book Wagner figures, ironically enough, as one of Thomas Mann's artist-criminals: a figure of enormous energy and dangerous charm who contrives to rob men of their money and their wives. It was this energy and this charm that flowed from the molten core of Wagner's being: his uncontrollable need to dominate.

When a boy Wagner was overwhelmed by a performance of Weber's *Der Freischütz.* It was not the music as such that moved him; he responded to Weber's commanding leadership of the orchestra. He envied the power Weber held over the public, his ability to hold and move an audience. The young Wagner cried, *"Nicht Kaiser und nicht König, aber so dastehn und dirigieren—!"* ("Not to be an emperor or king, but to stand up and direct like that!) Later in life, an old man at Wahnfried issuing edicts to the world on culture and politics, Wagner was more servilely attended to, more obsequiously obeyed than most real kings. To his subjects in Bayreuth, "his word was law . . ." and Cosima declared, "you know that I always refrain from expressing any opinion as against the Meister, whose ideas about art have become our faith." Wagner's ideas, his relations with other men and with women, his entire demoniac personality, issued from his thrust toward self-assertion and his compulsion to bend others to his will.

Doubtless his ruthless energy in hurdling obstacles, whether they were lack of money to sustain a style of life he deemed appropriate to his genius, or the persistent misunderstanding of critics who would not allow that he was a combination of Shakespeare and Beethoven, flowed from his creative rage. The same power that wrought thirteen operas, including the stupendous *Ring* and *Tristan,* and ten volumes of polemics and prose theorizing, also demolished the lives of those who entered the circle of his influence. He could be ingratiating when he wished; he was an en-

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raged Wotan when crossed or contradicted. He could not sustain friendships; he tolerated other men only as disciples or functionaries. He used women shamelessly as muses or nurses, as sexual partners who could stimulate his creative energies, or as ministering mothers who could provide his creature comforts and shield him from annoyances. From one point of view, Wagner's life was a flowing chaos from its dramatic and disorderly beginning to its triumphant conclusion. From another point of view, it reveals a passionate unity of purpose: impossible goals set and achieved, contradictory theories broached and ultimately realized in practice, and the establishment of a body of musical-dramatic work and a permanent theater-shrine consecrated to its performance.

His life exhibits mythic symmetries. Wagner's parentage was ambiguous: it now appears certain he was the son of the actor Ludwig Geyer. Nietzsche was the first to blab:

> Was Wagner really a German? There are several reasons for asking this question. It is hard to discover any German trait in him. . . . His father was an actor called Geyer. A *Geyer* [vulture] is nearly an *Adler* [eagle]. . . .

The early biographies, including Wagner's *Mein Leben* ("a fable convenue," said Nietzsche), all allege that Wagner's father was Carl Friedrich Wagner, a Leipzig police official. But both Newman and Gutman believe the evidence is overwhelming that Geyer was Wagner's father. What appears more interesting and important is that Wagner's mother probably did not know which was Richard's father; Geyer and the elder Wagner were both on the scene. In an intriguing play of words, Wagner hinted that his mother was sexual partner to both men and that Geyer was his real father. Gutman notes

> . . . that in *Mein Leben* he wished, at least subconsciously, to hint at the Geyer paternity. He need not have described Carl Friedrich's late evenings at the theater, and certainly, had he wanted to, he could have expressed somewhat differently that clause which relates how on these nights "the estimable actor generally filled his [Carl Friedrich's] place in the bosom of the family." The phrase is suggestive enough in English, but the German way of turning it is *"im Schosse seiner Familie"* or "in the lap of the family." Since the word *"Schosse"* must in German do double duty for "lap" and "womb," it is difficult to imagine that the Wagner who was one day to make even his Kundry speak in puns was completely unaware of the implications of the idiom he chose to employ.

Later, as if Wagner's destiny was one of eternal reenactment, Wagner and Hans von Bülow found themselves in the situation of the elder Wagner and Geyer. For years, Wagner, and his wife Cosima, and von Bülow maintained a scandalously public *ménage à trois.* Cosima bore at least one child of questionable paternity during this period. Although Isolde Wagner resembled Richard, von Bülow protested to his death (and beyond: he provided Isolde with an inheritance) that he had fathered Isolde. To complete the correspondences, it might be mentioned that both Wagner's mother and Cosima were illegitimate. Wagner's mother was the natural daughter of a precocious German prince; Cosima was the daughter of Liszt and his mistress the Countess Marie d'Agoult.

Why did Wagner go to such pains to conceal, and at the same time coyly to reveal, his origins? Life around him was hardly proper and he was not prudish. Again, Nietzsche suggests the answer:

> It is hard to discover any German trait in him. The great learner that he was, he learned to mimic much that was German—that is all. His own nature contradicts what up to this time has been perceived as German: not to speak of a German musician!

Geyer was a name held largely by Jews. If Wagner were even half-Jewish, he could not then be *echt deutsch;* he had insisted in his *Judaism in Music* that no Jew could write genuine German music. Wagner attacked Jewish musicians, including Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer, as aliens and counterfeiters: musical parrots who could never attain to true German quality in their art. Nietzsche, who hated both anti-

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Semitism and German nationalism, hoists Wagner with his own petard. If Wagner were Geyer's son, Wagner was no German but a Jew; if he were a Jew, it follows, by Wagner's own bigoted reasoning, that Wagnerian art was ersatz.

By Nietzsche's analysis Wagner's anti-Semitism emerges as colossal *Selbsthass:* a *Selbsthass* that became an ideology and finally a program. Wagner's hatred of Jews was no mere social snobbery or defect in education or breeding; it was a principle of his existence. He treated devoted followers such as Hermann Levi and Joseph Rubinstein with withering contempt for the sin of being Jews and made their lives a steady misery. Newman comments that Wagner "lost no opportunity, year in and year out, of fretting the life out of his Jewish friends and collaborators about their Judaism." Cosima, who followed wherever Richard led, made anti-Semitism an integral part of the Bayreuth creed; the insanities of *Judaism in Music* became a sacred text to the second generation of Wagnerians. (It is perhaps lucky that Cosima died in 1930; she had one Jewish grandmother and would not have qualified as an Aryan under the Nuremberg laws.)

Such mythic symmetries and the repeated motifs of mysterious origins, changeling children, and unconventional marital arrangements form familiar elements in the lives of mythic heroes and romantic artists. Wagner's life spills over into his work. His operas are concerned with heroes from unknown lands imposing irrational conditions on marriage (*Lohengrin*); with the permutations and combinations of incestuous possibilities (the *Ring*); with nephews usurping the sexual prerogatives of uncles *(Tristan).* Like other romantic artists Wagner conceived himself the hero of his greatest work, his own tormented life. Shelley, Keats and Byron among poets; Schubert, Schumann and Wolf among musicians paid the terrible price for romantic intensity and creative ferocity: after relatively brief periods of concentrated effort, they burned themselves out in illness or succumbed to insanity. Wagner lived as disorderly and intense a life as theirs—although it must be said that Cosima brought a measure of middle-class serenity to his latter years. But he sustained his energies and gifts through the completion of the *Ring.* He had the temperament of the romantic artist-poseur; he had the ferocious energy and low peasant cunning of his Saxon ancestors.

His century tolerated and encouraged him. Enough men (and most women) were willing to sacrifice themselves to what they believed was the high cause of Wagnerian art. Wagner got away with his pose and his sublime contempt for those he felt had only one purpose in being born: to render him homage, service, money, and sexual gratification. After the turn of the century a new life-style for artists manifested itself. This style is dramatized in Thomas Mann's novella, *Tonio Kröger.* Tonio is the thoroughly modern, programatically self-conscious artist; among the bourgeoisie he is a bohemian, among the bohemians he is a bourgeois. We have observed other disguises of the artist. T. S. Eliot appeared as the poet-bank clerk, poet-publisher, and poet as High Church dogmatist. Wallace Stevens and Charles Ives worked in the insurance business; William Carlos Williams practiced medicine in Paterson, New Jersey. Of course, some still played the old artist role. Dylan Thomas and Hart Crane, Ezra Pound and W. B. Yeats flashed their lightnings through the romantic mask. But with a difference: Crane literally and Thomas symbolically committed suicide; Pound was incarcerated as mentally incompetent; W. B. Yeats wore the masks of Irish nationalist and conserver of old orders, of the mantic with a raging god in his breast and of the "smiling public man." To live as an artist he played the vacillating part of Tonio Kröger.

Wagner got away with the style of life he so magnificently espoused. That style now appears quaint, irrelevant to the concerns of practicing poets, painters and musicians. We still have, of course, heroes and heroines of the intense life: young men and women who would rather *be* poets or painters than master the difficulties of a demanding craft. But we have few artists

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like Wagner, who insisted from the top of his head (wearing the celebrated *Meister* cap) right down through his padded silk dressing gown on being, not only the greatest musician of his age, but also an uncontradicted legislator of his world. It is not surprising to us (although it was infuriating to Wagner) that he aroused hostility: that many disputed his claims and hampered his ambitions. It is surprising he got so far and was able to achieve so much. It is testimony to Wagner's flaming self-confidence and absolute faith in his own gifts; it is also a testimony to the century that set such a value on art and that so pampered its artists.

For Ernest Newman it was not significant that Hitler "in his own foolish way" worshiped Wagner. Newman lived through World War II, saw Germany act out its version of *Götterdämmerung,* and excoriated, as did all decent men, the scummy outrage of National Socialism. But he could not awake from the Wagnerian enchantment to recognize that Wagner and Wagnerism were linked to the destiny of the Third Reich and to the disaster it was for the world. He did not see Wagner as part of a historical organism spawned in the revolutions of 1830 and 1848, matured in the anti-Semitic and nationalist movements of the later nineteenth century, and developed to full monstrousness in German totalitarianism.

Wagner's life spanned the nineteenth century. He was a teen-ager in 1830 and composed an overture celebrating the July Revolution and political liberty. He was *nel mezzo del cammin* in 1848, a disciple of Feuerbach and a friend of the revolutionist Bakunin. Wagner was the fiercest Young Hegelian of them all; he called for the redemption of mankind through bloody destruction:

> Ay, we behold it, the old world is crumbling, a *new* will rise therefrom; for the lofty goddess Revolution comes rustling on the wings of storm, her stately head ringed round with lightnings, a sword in her right hand, a torch in her left, her eye so stern, so punitive, so cold . . . [The Revolution speaks] "I will destroy the existing order of things, which parts this one mankind into hostile nations, into powerful and weak, privileged and outcast, rich and poor . . . I will destroy the order of things that turns millions to slaves of a few, and these few to slaves of their own might, own riches . . . I am *Revolution,* I am the ever-fashioning Life, I am the only God . . ." And lo! the legions on the hills . . . Revolution pours into their brains, their bones, their flesh . . . they raise themselves erect . . . a radiant light streams from their eyes and with the heaven-shaking cry *I am a Man!* the millions, the embodied Revolution becomes Man. . . .

Wagner was no paper revolutionary. His activities during the May uprising of 1849 led to an indictment for treason, a possible death sentence, and eventual exile to Switzerland. Bakunin was captured and imprisoned; Wagner fled to Zurich. Out of these experiences Wagner conceived a new hero of the folk: Siegfried was born out of the smoke and turmoil of revolution. Nietzsche comments, "For half his life Wagner believed in the revolution, as much as any Frenchman believed in it. He looked for it in the runic writings of myth; he believed he had found in Siegfried the typical revolutionary."

Wagner later gave up the revolution and became *reichsdeutsch.* He read Schopenhauer, made the acquaintance of Gobineau, and converted to the fashionable historical pessimism of the later nineteenth century. He never, to the despair of King Ludwig, stopped meddling in politics; he never stopped regarding the Jew as an enemy of mankind. His early contacts with the Hegelians of the Left convinced him that social problems were rooted in economic problems; the Jew could be easily characterized as the economic enemy of society. The most notable of the Left Hegelians, Karl Marx, had defined the secular meaning of *Judaism* as mankind's impulse toward material gain. Marx's "On the Jewish Question" tells us that worldly Judaism is involved in bargaining and money, that "Emancipation from *bargaining* and *money,* and thus from practical and real Judaism would be the self-emancipation of our era . . . we perceive in Judaism a general and *contemporary anti-social* ele-

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ment. . . . The *emancipation of the Jews,* in the final analysis, is the emancipation of mankind from Judaism."

It is not polite to mention in radical circles that anti-Jewish feeling (not to be confused with racist anti-Semitism) is frequently a grotesque pollutant of revolutionary ideologies. Wagner, the revolutionary and Left Hegelian of the forties, identified the Jew as the stereotypical monster of finance capitalism, the anti-social economic enemy of Marx's analysis. But Wagner goes beyond Marx and beyond the various religious or snobbish anti-Semitisms of his age. Others detested Jews for their lack of status; an English aristocrat could not accept a Jew as a gentleman. The ignorant and superstitious feared them for their alien ways; a Russian peasant regarded the Jew as the communicant of a cruel religion that used the blood of Christian children in its rituals. Wagner's anti-Semitism was neither religious—"If Wagner is a Christian, then Liszt is a Church Father," jeered Nietzsche —nor snobbish: some of his best friends were Jews. Wagner's Judeophobia was racial.

The *locus classicus* of Wagnerian anti-Semitism, *Judaism in Music,* proposes the innate tribal difference of Jews. The Volk (that mystical, cohesive racial entity) draws back in instinctive revulsion from the very person of the Jew: ". . . we have to explain to ourselves the *involuntary repellence* [italics Wagner's: heavy italicizing is a feature of post-Hegelian prose style] possessed for us by the nature and personality of the Jews . . . we only purposely belie ourselves . . . when we think necessary to hold immoral and taboo all open proclamation of our natural repugnance against all Jewish nature." Jews, Wagner asserts, are inherently alien; their *Wesen* (essential being) is antithetical to the German spirit. Wagner's son-in-law and disciple, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, raised this notion to the level of a mystical experience: "When a Jew, otherwise indistinguishable from a German, enters a room, a child, usually a girl, will begin to cry."

Judaism in Music is a disorderly polemic; Wagner had no political or social interest in contemporary problems of Jewish emancipation and citizenship; he had no coherent political ends to further. There occurs a sinister and prophetic warning: he tells the Jews, "But bethink ye, that one only thing can redeem you from the burden of your curse: the redemption of Ahasuerus: *Going under.*" Despite this pre-Auschwitz horror, *Judaism in Music* is more paranoiac than programmatic, more a symptom of a severe derangement of character than a plan for a pogrom. It was later, when Wagner became friends with Gobineau, that the embryonic racism of *Judaism in Music* developed into a philosophy of history: a theory of human degeneration through corruption of the blood.

Wagner first met Gobineau in 1876. With his high susceptibility to plausible insanities, Wagner grafted his congenital anti-Semitism on to Gobineau's notions of Aryan racial superiority, Teutonic aristocratic heroism, and overriding historical pessimism. Wagner's talents for synthesis were not confined to the *Gesamtkunstwerk* with its amalgamation of music, poetry, and scenic art; Wagner brings even vegetarianism to bear on the problem of historical decline. But it is not only corruption of diet, it is corruption of blood that has brought mankind to its present disastrous state. In the essay "Hero-dom and Christendom" (1881) Wagner offers these generalizations: "It certainly may be right to charge this purblind dulness of our public spirit to a vitiation of our blood—not only by departure from the natural food [vegetables] of man, but above all by the tainting of the hero-blood of noblest races with that of former cannibals now trained to be the business-agents of Society. . . ." Gutman reads the essay "Hero-dom and Christendom" as the allegorical underplot of *Parsifal.* The Grail Knights represent a society of Aryan elites; Amfortas is mankind fallen through the pollution of blood; Kundry and Klingsor symbolize elements of racial degeneration. Gutman's reading is not altogether convincing, but certainly *Parsifal* is obsessed

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with an unwholesome concern for sexual purity and drenched in sanguinary streams.

The faithful Wagnerians of the Villa Wahnfried, watched over by the cold eye and held together by the iron hand of Cosima, raised Wagner's rumblings about blood and race to the level of a new German doctrine. Chief among the proselytes of Bayreuth was Houston Stewart Chamberlain, who took over Wagner's racial theories and added some of his own. The result of the mixture was the influential *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*. Wagner's theories about blood and race led to gloomy conclusions about the end of all things. His vision was apocalyptic, to be sure; but it was an apocalypse realized only in the musical architectonics of the *Ring*. *Götterdämmerung* ends in world destruction and the return to nature of both gods and men. Chamberlain would change this destiny; he proposed not world destruction but world domination. The world dominators would be, of course, the Germanic peoples.

Chamberlain's work endeared him to Wilhelm II, who wrote him in 1902 that "nearly all the young officers in the Guard Corps study and discuss *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*." Chamberlain was also a personal link between the Wagnerian milieu and Hitler. Hitler first came to Bayreuth in 1923 with the chief mythographer of National Socialism, Alfred Rosenberg. Chamberlain, paralyzed and dying, gave Hitler his official blessing; he recognized in the Austrian fanatic a new savior for the Aryan peoples. The circle around Chamberlain, which included Siegfried Wagner and his English wife Winifred, became enthusiasts of the new Nazi movement. Bayreuth remained Hitler's spiritual home throughout the Nazi period; after Siegfried Wagner's death in 1930, it was even rumored that *Der Führer* would marry the widowed Frau Winifred.

Hitler had discovered Wagner long before he made the pilgrimage to Bayreuth. He heard *Lohengrin* when he was twelve and declared it the most shattering experience of his life. Wagner's writings were the model for his own brutal, unsyntactic prose style. Hitler and his co-mythographers, Rosenberg and Goebbels, saw the tremendous propagandistic possibilities in Wagner's peculiar transformation of language into emotional noise. Wagner's meandering periods, clumsy locutions and barbaric neologisms became the basis of a new nonlanguage, *Nazideutsch*. Ernst Cassirer remarks of this Newspeak:

> If nowadays [1944-45] I happen to read a German book, published in these last ten years, not a political but a theoretical book, a work dealing with philosophical, historical, or economic problems—I find to my amazement that I no longer understand the German language. New words have been coined; and even the old ones are used in a new sense; they have undergone a deep change of meaning . . . those words which were formerly used in a descriptive, logical, or semantic sense, are now used as magic words that are destined to produce certain effects and to stir up certain emotions.

Hitler not only appropriated Wagner's prose style; he made Wagnerian stage ritual and symbology part of the larger spectacle of Nazi life. A new Nazi religion was put together from the *Ring;* Nordic mythology replaced Christian belief. Thomas Mann early protested that this was a distortion of Wagner's art, a theft and a rape: "Folk and sword and myth and Nordic heroics: these, on certain lips, are but unworthy plunderings from the Wagnerian vocabulary." But Hitler did not rape Wagner's art; it was more nearly a seduction. So completely did the Nazis make Wagner their own, so cleverly woven together were the woof of Wagnerian art and the warp of Nazi ideology, that Mann later changed his mind about the connections between Wagner and National Socialism. He not only acknowledged the historical link between Wagner's prose writings and Nazi ideology; he saw Wagnerian music drama "created and directed 'against civilization,' against the entire culture and society dominant since the Renaissance. . . ." I quote the rest of this fascinating critique of what Mann held so dear, *The Ring of the Niebelungs:*

> With its *Wagalaweia* and its alliteration, its mixture of roots-in-the-soil and eyes-toward-the-

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future, its appeal for a classless society, its mythical-reactionary revolutionism—with all these, it is the exact spiritual forerunner of the "metapolitical" movement today [1940] terrorizing the world. . . .

Mann does not here talk directly of Wagner's music *qua* music; he is discussing the literary content of the musical-dramatic whole. Because all of Wagner's work is opera (with the exception of the *Siegfried Idyll* and certain immature instrumental compositions), the musical texture cannot be separated from its highly charged and psychologically suggestive conceptual content. It is a music fully informed with extramusical meaning. As such it represents the high point of that Romantic literary-musical relationship that begins with the Ninth Symphony and reaches final expression in Mahler's gigantic program symphonies. It is impossible, then, to experience Wagner's music solely as music; what we experience is a unique combination of *music and myth.*

Wagner married the assertive, always powerful, totally ambiguous body of myth to the enveloping and absorbing soul of music. The myth can be detached and, as the Nazis showed, used for pernicious political ends. It is inherent in myth that its content can be assigned; it can be given meanings never intended by either the composer or the primitive Ur-poet who first projected into nature the existence of gods and monsters, giants and dwarfs, norns and earth mothers. Wagner's coupling of myth and music resulted in a hyperexpressive art capable of far-reaching exploitation. Like myth, music reaches below the concrete skin of our civilization; like myth music deals in the nonrational: in the patterning of emotion and in leading the assault forces from below upon intellectual control. Wagner's music, with its massive orchestral effects and psychological shrewdness, allows the listener—especially the *nonmusical* listener—the luxury of wallowing in his own unformed feelings. It is music to moon by, to make love by, and, if one is so disposed, to hate and kill by.

Are we then to agree with Nietzsche that Wagner is a sickness; that Wagner's art as well as his political and racial theorizing constitute a danger to the world's moral health? Only if we can unravel two of the knottiest strands in aesthetic and ethical theory: the question of musical ethos and the question of censorship. Aristotle treats music in his *Politics* (not in the *Poetics*) because of its putative effects on character and social behavior. He tells us "musical compositions . . . are, in their very nature, representations of states of character. This is an evident fact." Is Wagner's music representative of undesirable emotions that debase human character; is its total *ethos inherently* conducive to such aberrations as National Socialism? If this is truly and unequivocally the case are we then prepared to banish Wagner's operas from our republic in order that we might forestall future outbreaks of totalitarian brutality?

At this point most of us back off. We would not employ repression and censorship, totalitarian means, to prevent possible totalitarian ends. The historical truth seems that *all* music contributed, in an indirect and probably unanalyzable way, to the spiritual disease that made National Socialism a possibility in the Germany of *l'entre deux guerres.* The German *Geist* was most comfortable in music and idealist metaphysics, areas remote from the realities of a reasonable, pragmatic politics. In his *Steppenwolf,* written after the First but before the Second World War, Hermann Hesse digresses on the culpability of music in forming a German intellectual type alienated from actuality and yearning for a speech without words:

Instead of playing his part as truly and honestly as he could, the German intellectual has constantly rebelled against the word and against reason and courted music. And so the German spirit, carousing in music, in wonderful creations of sound, and wonderful beauties of feeling and mood that were never pressed home to reality, has left the greater part of its practical gifts to decay. None of us intellectuals is at home in reality. We are strange and hostile to it. That is why the part played by the intellect even in our own German reality, in our history

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and politics and public opinions, has been so lamentable a one.

Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* plays a tremendous set of variations on this theme; its hero, the composer Adrian Leverkühn is a composite figure who resembles Nietzsche, Wagner, Mahler, and other heroes of German *Kultur*. That he is a revolutionary composer like Wagner and that he concludes a pact with the devil is made symbolic of German destiny: a destiny deeply involved with musical art. Settembrini, the humanist in Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, tells us that music is politically suspect and that German devotion to it reveals a primeval stupidity. Both Mann and Hesse echo Nietzsche in these speculations. Nietzsche was also devoted to music and to the music of Richard Wagner. He came to hate Wagner and distrust the power of music over the Germans. In one of the aphorisms from *Twilight of the Idols*, he observes: "How little it takes to be happy! The sound of a bag-pipe. —Without music life would be a mistake. The German imagines that God Himself sings songs."

It is easy to indict Wagner's theories and Wagner's art as accessories before the fact of National Socialism. Wagner himself was an incredibly malicious, hate-consumed man. His villainies of thought became part of Nazi theory and were implemented in Nazi practices. A villainy of thought, however, is not an atrocity of action: it is one thing to evince psychopathic hatred of Jews; it is quite another to order and carry out a Final Solution. Had he been alive during the decades of Hitlerism, it is conceivable he might have looked about him and cried, "That is not what I meant at all!" Stefan George and Oswald Spengler, men whose intellectual stance pointed toward Nazi ideals, turned their backs on Nazi reality. George left Germany and died an exile; Spengler, who first welcomed Nazi energy and the political tactics of Caesarism, soon displayed an aristocratic distaste for Nazi bloodthirstiness. Of course, we cannot know how Wagner *might have* behaved. He *might have* quarreled with the Nazi strictures on *Kulturbolschewismus;* like the thoroughly modern artist he was, he continually broke new ground in musical technique and expression. He also *might have* accepted a position as Nazi Director of German Culture.

Events have built a passageway from Wagner to the cataclysm of our age. We can now look down that passageway with clear vision ("twenty-twenty hindsight," my students call it); it is impossible to deny Wagner's historical and intellectual complicity. But the fixing of historical guilt is a dangerous and slippery matter: as equivocal as fixing national or collective guilt; as useless as designating whole societies as "sick." If Wagner can be held, in some crucial way, responsible for Nazi atrocities, then all of German culture must be, at least in part, also responsible. Behind Wagner stretches the corridor of German romanticism: the music of Weber, Schubert and Beethoven; the philosophies of Schopenhauer, Hegel, Herder and Kant. All, we might suppose, are implicated. And after all are examined, brought to trial and judged guilty, how do we go about punishing the past? We cannot, of course. Fixings of national or historical guilt are rhetorical exercises, designed to relieve the feelings of those, so bewildered and frightened by events, that they must discover simple explanations and single causes. Thus the response to the brutal and monstrous destruction of the Jews has been, from some quarters, an irrational and violent hatred of all things German.

Wagner's art is heavily suggestive, highly symbolic, physiologically potent; it is an art to which dangerous and destructive meanings can be easily assigned. Of all the arts, music is the most sensitive to assigned meaning; tones in themselves hold no conceptual or situational import but they are immensely receptive to semantic "filling-out." Listeners, even musically sophisticated and technically informed listeners, will experience extramusical connotations in their experience of a particular musical composition. Once experienced, these connotations become part of any future listening; they are tenacious and difficult to exorcise. Wagner's fusion of music

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and myth was particularly susceptible to an easy identification with Nazi ideology; once made, the identification continues to generate images and associations, moods and feelings that have no integral basis in Wagner's original meaning. (I still find myself inwardly flinching when I listen to sections of the *Ring:* I cannot dissociate Siegfried's motifs from the great fire raids on London.)

A problem of Wagner's music, then, is "denazification," the removal of political connotations and associations. Such removal will, in the words of Thomas Mann, ". . . restore political innocence to the works of Germany, and a clear conscience to those who admire them. They will no longer have to sigh: It is great, it is splendid, but it is 'against civilization.'" Wagner's rehabilitation has been taking place during the last twenty-five years; both time and deliberate effort have restored Wagner's operas to a new respectability. New generations of listeners know little or do not care to know about the Nazi past; they can listen to the *Ring* or *Parsifal* unaware of their connections with the *Führer* cult and the doctrines of blood and soil. Time itself will eliminate most of the unfortunate identifications of Wagnerian art with Nazi doctrine. New critical evaluations have also rearranged the relative aesthetic merits of the Wagnerian *oeuvre*. For Thomas Mann the center of Wagner's art was the world of the *Ring:* so rich in implication and so capable of Nazi exploitation. Many musicians and cultural historians now view *Tristan* as Wagner's single, undisputed masterpiece. *Tristan* is marred neither by the pompous chauvinism of *Die Meistersinger* nor by the regressive *Urdummheit* of the *Ring;* it is at once the most purely human and the most purely mythical of all Wagner's works.

The future of Wagner's music drama is also bound up with the new critical consciousness of myth. It is through grasping that *Tristan* is the archetypal story of Eros and its indissoluble union with Thanatos that we become fully aware of its meaning. Similarly, we must reinterpret ("denazify," if you will) the *Ring* as a composite theogony and quest in which men and gods strive for wealth and power and then sink back into nature. It is the story of beginnings, of endless striving, and of the Eternal Recurrence. We need not read *Parsifal,* as Gutman does, as an allegory of Aryan racial purity. *Parsifal* tells of the wounded Fisher King, the sexual symbols of Grail and Spear, and seasonal renewal. It is the same myth Eliot uses in *The Waste Land;* indeed, Eliot's poem resonates with Wagnerian allusion and is structured on Wagnerian principles of leitmotiv and psychological progression. Even *Die Meistersinger,* seemingly remote from the world of gods and archetypes, yields to mythical interpretation. On one level *Die Meistersinger* celebrates German art and the *via media* between tradition and revolution; it is a long brag on German accomplishment in music. But on a more profound level it recalls the innocent world of The Garden and its first inhabitants; it is a backward glance toward man's brief residence in Paradise. Walther's Prize Song makes this explicit; all the symbols of our first world combine in these lines, the mythical as well as melodic center of the opera:

> Mornings gleaming in rose-filled light,
> The air swollen with bud and fragrance,
> With all, never-imagined rapture,
> A Garden invited me:
> There, under a Wondrous Tree,
> Richly laden with fruit,
> Appeared in heavenly dream of love
> What highest longing and desire
> So boldly promised to fulfill:
> The most beautiful woman,
> Eve in Paradise.

Wagner's doggerel is redeemed by the music. The melodic line and orchestral color divert, swallow up the "poetic" pretensions of the verse so that the conceptual center, the mythic core of Garden, magic tree, and primeval woman, remain to take possession of our imagination. Wagner is no more than a mediocre man of literature; his handling of language is often clumsy and grotesque. But he is a canny manipulator of symbols and a musician with endless resources.

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Nor was Wagner a great dramatist. Wagner himself fostered the notion that he was Shakespeare's heir: a notion kept alive (like the slander that England was *das Land ohne Musik*) by nationalist conceit. If we must have a Shakespeare of opera, we should look, as Brigid Brophy points out,* to Mozart. Mozart's dramatic world, like Shakespeare's, exists apart from the urgings and promptings of personal necessity, irritable self-concerns, and violent assertions of will. Don Giovanni, Figaro, Belmonte, Constanze, Susanna, the Queen of the Night: these are not projections or amplifications of a single personality but characters each inhabiting a unique universe. They are no more "Mozart" than Hamlet and Claudius, Othello and Iago, Lady Macbeth and Perdita are "Shakespeare." Wagner's dramatic world moves centripetally inward, toward a divided, ambivalent, but always identifiable Wagnerian self. Tristan is Wagner the lover and "philosopher" of Schopenhauerian ego-annihilation; Wotan the stern paterfamilias keeping a large host of female relatives in line; Klingsor and Parsifal the tortured sorcerer and the ascetic prophet of renunciation; and so on through the Wagnerian dramatis personae. These refractions of Wagner's personal image make no sharp dramatic focus; they illuminate the psychological complexity of Wagner's inner life: his demonic will, his eroticism and sensuousness, his self-pity and despair. Nietzsche was accurate in seeing Wagner's work as case history, not as drama.

Lyric inwardness, not dramatic objectivity, characterizes Wagner's operas. Wagnerian myth-making never integrates itself with reality: its direction leads individual souls away from community and ordinary human life. No work is more profoundly antidramatic than *Tristan* with its purely musical consummation of sexual passion. Little happens on the stage; the lovemaking of Tristan and Isolde is interrupted at the end of the second act and resumed only after Tristan's death in the third. The dramatic clashes occur in the orchestra; an incredible movement of harmony and orchestral color make explicit what is obscured in the romantic vocabulary of erotic circumlocution: the endless talk of unbearable bliss, world-reunciation, oceanic heavings, meltings and mergings. James Huneker remarked that if what went on in the orchestra took place on stage, performances of *Tristan* would be stopped by the police.

Die Meistersinger, the comic antipole of the tragic *Tristan,* alternates between elaborate stage ritual and soliloquy—scarcely the ingredients of compelling dramatic interaction. Kindly, all-knowing, lawgiving Hans Sachs dominates the whole busy pageant of *Die Meistersinger.* Like *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the action leads from night-drenched illusion to clear reality; but the action is typically impeded by the clichés of Grand Opera: detachable arias, ensemble numbers, a ballet, a fat and catchy military march. True, the apprentices and guildsmen march out into the daylight of the world; the comedy comes to terms, as comedy must, with things as they are. But so much of *Die Meistersinger* is special pleading for Wagner (alias Hans Sachs), so much of the music is insipidly sentimental or insistently *viereckig* (middle-class "square") that its dramatic interest is blunted and dissipated.

I invoke Mozart again, not to make odious comparisons, but to illuminate the basis of Wagnerian art. Amorous intrigue drives the action of *Don Giovanni* and *The Marriage of Figaro.* Human attachments are carefully depicted, interfered with, and then triumphantly restored. Metaphysical lust sends the Don to Hell; ordinary human affection unites Zerlina and Masetto, Figaro and Susanna. Erotic passion may be a deeply serious matter, involving rape and murder; love can also be a confusion of identity, a testing of all-too-human frailty, an opportunity for wisdom and deep resignation. Some suffer, some triumph, most persist and endure. But Wagner's Eros is always transcendental power; Tristan and Isolde, Siegfried and Brünnhilde move beyond the human realm

* In her *Mozart the Dramatist* (New York, 1964): a disorderly, perverse, but brilliantly suggestive book.

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to complete in outer darkness what is denied to them in life. Romantic love, in its very essence, is antithetical to dramatic representation. Deceptions and delays, overwhelming nostalgia for remembered bliss, the pain of separation and the vacancy of waiting: these are negative elements, incapable of being fully or convincingly imitated in action but capable of the most precise and subtle delineation in music.

It is primarily as music that Wagner's art affects us. The psychology of character becomes a function of the orchestra; the establishment of mood a function of harmonic tension; the development of movement and the conflict of motivations a function of cyclical forms, polyphonic weaving of motifs, and other musical procedures. Spectacle, and the complicated machinery necessary to produce it, have become an increasingly less important part of Wagnerian productions. The nearly bare-stage mountings of Wieland Wagner (which outraged the Bayreuth traditionalists) give impressive proof that Wagner's art can dispense with fully immersed Rhine Maidens, unpunctual Swan Boats, drowsy paper dragons, and the other absurdities that were once thought to lend "realism" to the musical embodiment of myth.

Other hallowed verities about Wagner are giving way to new insights and values. At one time Wagner's Promethean musical rhetoric seemed typical of Beethoven. Wagner's music generates neither the dialectic of opposites that is the center of Beethoven's sonata structure nor the furious logic of his variation and fugal forms. Wagner is as far from Beethoven as he is from Shakespeare. His musical practice is close to Schubert's in its absolute expressiveness and psychological penetration. The haunted world of Schubert's *Winterreise* and *Schwanengesang* is similar to *Tristan* in its bittersweet desolation and aching sense of alienation. The demonic intensity of Schubert's *Erlkönig* and *D Minor Quartet* pervades *Die Walküre*. I am not talking about specific influences and thefts—although Wagner stole liberally from Schubert as he did from other, often less exalted, figures. Rather, Wagner succeeded in building large musical forms, as Schubert and other romantic composers did, without a mastery of traditional musical architectonics. It is essentially an art of lyric progression and unfailing harmonic invention that serves to illustrate and finally embody an expressive content external to the music. Every melody and harmonic structure in Wagner is charged with symbolic meaning; every musical element has its precise literary equivalent.

It is no surprise that the French symbolist poets recognized their spiritual center in Wagner's art. Baudelaire, Gautier and Verlaine were declared Wagnerians and professed to accomplish for poetry what Wagner had for music. If Wagner had brought music close to the expressive particularity of poetry, the symbolists would give poetry the connotative richness and physiological directness of music. Wagner was too good a composer to allow his music to become merely the vehicle of literary messages; Baudelaire was too good a poet to allow his verses to deliquesce into vague pools of imagery and sonorous patches of tone color. But doubtless Wagner and the French symbolists brought music and literature into a new and consequential relationship. A relationship had existed in the lieder of Schubert, in the vaguely programmatic and highly atmospheric piano pieces of Schumann, and in such works as Berlioz's *Fantastic Symphony*. Nineteenth-century music, from Schubert on, was immersed in the torrential floodwaters of romantic literary art. With Wagner and the school of post-Wagnerian composers (Strauss, Mahler, and the Schönberg of *Verklärte Nacht)* music becomes unthinkable without some programmatic underlining or direct setting of a poetic text.

Wagner's fusion of music and literature is, in the history of the arts, a unique and paradoxical phenomenon. Wagner's music is now more frequently performed in orchestral concerts than on the stage; its self-sufficiency as music without text is clearly established. Yet the overwhelming emotional density of this music derives from its associations, from the unspoken word at its core. If we had never before

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heard the Prelude to *Tristan,* if we knew nothing of the story of the opera, we would understand the emotional import of those opening four notes and the enigmatic "Tristan-chord." The hyperexpressiveness of Wagner's music has its basis in certain technical matters: the dissolution of rhythm and tonality and the heightened use of orchestral color and dynamics. But technical means serve aesthetic ends: in Wagner's case, the extramusical meaning. Wagner's music is thoroughly violated by Ideas.

Such violation, Nietzsche complained, is decadent; it is also "modern." To us in the latter part of the twentieth century, Modernism and Decadence have been destinies long assented to. Despite all his protestations, Nietzsche never transcended his modernity; he only succeeded in going mad in the attempt. Wagner's art is decadent in that it expresses a civilization moving away from spiritual unity and social cohesion to newer mythologies and newer ideas of community; from moral absolutes to, in Nietzsche's celebrated term, the transvaluation of all values. Wagner's art is modern in that it attempts, in its strategic fusion of myth with music, to touch the underground stream of human existence. We have viewed the danger in such probing. But after Freud and Nietzsche, Frazer and Jung, we have learned to accept the irrational component of man's makeup and the fact that human behavior is not always determined by logical motivations. We have become comfortable in the abyss. And in our comfort the music of Wagner, with its return to the prehuman and a world untouched by social concern, assumes a new relevance.

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The Manifold Experience of Augustine

JOHN HERMAN RANDALL, JR.

Saint Augustine is the intellectual father of the Western Church and of Western Christianity. He is the one doctor through whose writings the whole body of religious and philosophical speculation of the ancient Church descended to the Middle Ages in Western Europe. For a thousand years, his thought was *the* philosophy of the Western tradition. Even when in the twelfth century the rediscovery of Aristotle brought new intellectual interests, and came to express a new set of values, medieval rather than Hellenistic, this new Aristotelian thought was fitted into the Augustinian framework, and Augustine himself was not rejected but rather reinterpreted. If philosophies are to be judged by their power, their power to express and organize and direct human experience, in our Western tradition no other thinker can touch the power of the thought of Saint Augustine.

After the more humanistic values and naturalistic thought of Aristotelian Scholasticism—from the middle of the thirteenth to the middle of the fifteenth century—Augustine proved more alive than ever during the Renaissance and the Reformation—so alive, that he was able to drive back Greece for some two hundred years. Again, he overwhelmed the optimistic rationalism of the Enlightenment, in the great religious revivals of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. And in our own day, in our own boasted reaction against reason and intelligence and in favor of human "existence" and commitment, although we have largely lost Augustine's religious symbols, Augustine's essential spirit has, ever since 1914, been driving out what we now consider Victorian complacency and humanistic and humanitarian acceptance of the world of modern science and technology.

Time was, not so long since, when Augustine's theology was a battle cry. In the America of the 1890's, in which my father grew to maturity, one had to be either for it or against it. But there are today few left who can be said really to "believe" in it literally. The Protestants, who triumphed in the sixteenth century in the name of Augustine, have now largely forgotten him. Even the Catholics have since 1879 based their intellectual life on Thomas Aquinas, who expresses values that are essentially "modern," not the "outmoded" values of medieval Augustinianism, or the equally medieval values of the Augustinian Reformers.*

We moderns are living in a different in-

✪ This reappraisal of Augustine's general significance by JOHN HERMAN RANDALL, JR., is based on a chapter in a volume he is preparing, to be entitled *Hellenistic Ways of Deliverance and the Making of the Christian Synthesis.* Mr. Randall is Frederick J. E. Woodbridge Professor Emeritus of Philosophy in Columbia University.

* Despite the efforts of the theologians of the last generation to revive the so-called "Reformation theology," it is doubtful whether they had much effect on the bulk of American "Christians," so-called, who remained unmoved by the values for which Augustine, the Reformers, and those "neo-orthodox" theologians stood. And today, Augustinian "neo-orthodoxy" seems pretty dead, in the face of the "secular city" and the revival of a "social gospel," even among the theologians themselves.

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tellectual world. The great system of Christian thought, carefully elaborated in the ancient world, which endured for fifteen hundred years, has in our century been visibly crumbling. We have even been told recently that Nietzsche was right: "God is dead!" But just because no man of intelligence is today tempted to "believe" literally in the traditional Christian body of ideas, because there are even few left among the educated who have to emancipate themselves from it any longer, as in the nineteenth century thoughtful men had to, we are at last free to rediscover Augustine and his essential insights, as men have done before, over and over again. Even the Jews can enjoy this freedom. I am tempted to say, "especially Jews," since they can still view him with greater objectivity than most Christians are able to do. Christians are still too emotionally involved in the aftermath of rejecting his thought, and traditional Christian ideas in general, to judge its significance impartially. But those who are not or are no longer "Christian" in the conventional and traditional sense are free to appreciate the human significance of Augustinian Christianity, which in the long history of our Western culture has been so tremendous. The "Christian Epic," as Augustine recounts it, is certainly, to say the least, a marvelous work of human intelligence and human art. It has given the Western tradition as rich a realm of the imagination in which to dwell, as great a wealth of suggestive religious symbols, as any culture has ever enjoyed. It has furnished an unrivaled opportunity for the artist, the poet, the painter and the sculptor, as well as for the religious genius. It has supplied a world of symbols capable of focusing and expressing almost every human interest and emotion.

If we are no longer concerned to claim that this Christian system is literally "true," why was it able to last so long? Why did it have such deep roots? Because it expressed, not any mere theory, but human life itself. Pascal gave the first "modern" answer to our question: Augustinian Christianity was rooted in human nature; it answered to, and expressed, both man's greatness and his petty and deadly weakness. So Pascal cried out, in the words of the Psalmist, to the God of Augustine, "Thou hast made my heart for Thee, and it will rest content only in Thee!"

So let us leave aside all Augustine's allegories, all his scriptural authorities and his syllogisms, and consider rather Augustine's vision, of human greatness and of human weakness, through which countless millions have gained spiritual freedom and deliverance, and salvation, such as is granted to man to attain.

Philosophies, the wise recognize, are hardly to be judged by their literal "truth": they are all to be taken "seriously but not literally," as our intelligent theologians today put it. No system of ideas can be said to be literally "true"—not even our boasted "science," powerful as it is in certain directions. All such systems are interpretations, in symbolic language, of the world and human life as men have experienced them. They can be called "true" only in the sense that they manage to organize men's beliefs and activities in terms of men's fundamental interests and commitments, in terms of their organizing or "ultimate" concern.

Augustinian Christianity furnishes a symbolic language for expressing human experience. Like Socrates, Augustine turned his back on trees and stones and sought Man. He found, not the whole man, above all, not the fearless, searching, self-reliant intelligence of the inquirer. But how little and how rarely after all do men possess it! How readily are they willing to forswear it for faith in an absolutely certain ideal! But Augustine found humanity, as no philosopher since has found it. In comparison, these later philosophies seem little personal visions, temporary concoctions of shifting ideas, things of a day, weak and anemic. Augustinian Christianity is strong because it is rooted in man's weakness, in his needs, aspirations, yearnings, struggles, and in his inevitable failures and frustrations.

Augustinian Christianity is, of course, very terrible. Tender minds, weak souls, shrink from it. They shrank especially in the proud, boastful, complacent days before the First World War. Those were the

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days in which men dwelt in a secure world, and were content with a rather sentimental optimism, the days in which all prosperous Christians shared the spirit of the Greek and Alexandrian Fathers of the Church, and built up a "liberal religion" on that spirit, as it filtered down to them through the German Idealists and the optimistic evolutionary philosophers, with their faith in a fairly automatic "Progress." They then created an American religion of sentimental hope and smug philosophy. The Jews were in the same boat: their ancient faith had in this country been well Americanized.

Against this "liberal religion," Augustine enters an emphatic "No!" Men inevitably fail. They fall short of their goals. The vast majority are "lost," through no personal fault of their own. They live like beasts in the field—or in an affluent society—delighting in their lusts. They are insensitive clods, who never will see God. Worst of all, little children, called into a brief existence through the selfish desire of their parents, who then die, are "lost" through eternity.

We moderns were dreaming, at the turn of the century, of attaining "complete social justice," of peace and democracy, of One World, and of a Good Life for all, of all mankind united in one great sticky gush of "Brotherly Love." Americans still so dream: it salves their consciences for acting like the Devil—as they have also convinced themselves they must.

But Nature—and human nature, alas!—continues to mock such foolish confidence. The facts of life *are* terrible. Men do not realize their ideals. Merit plays little part in the measure of success accorded them. The vast majority are most of the time beasts, with only a glimmer of finer things. Little children who die never do, in any intelligible sense, "save their souls." The "Earthly City"—although many have recently preferred to call it the "Capitalistic System," and today the phrase runs, "our sick society"—has crushed us and drained our life. And although that is gone now—what in the nineteenth century we used to call "capitalism" seems almost completely dead, especially in America—the "Earthly City" that is succeeding it scarcely seems to be ushering in the millennium.

Whatever else Augustine may be, he is surely what we like today to call a "realist," with just that salutary freedom from sentimentality that suits the temper of the times, just the "realism" that fills twentieth-century art and writing, on which we pride ourselves—that "realism" that does not blink at the more disagreeable facts, but shuts its eyes only to the brighter ones.

So Augustine hardly shocks men any more, when he says that the will of man, even of the best of men, is not good, but "corrupt"—something that before 1914 seemed utterly perverse. To be sure, we flatter ourselves that now we understand something of the causes of that corruption, although we can hardly be said to have discovered the cure. Men have been turning to the Augustinian spirit once more, as men have turned to it so often in the past, after similar periods of self-reliance and confidence in the intelligence and goodwill of men. When self-reliance fails, as sooner or later it has always done in the past, and as it has recently shown marked signs of doing again, men are led to rediscover Augustine's vision of "man's estate," of what is today called "the human condition." And perhaps they may even find once more his faith, in a redemption bestowed gratuitously by God—or by Nature—with no regard for human merit. Augustine's symbols, to be sure, are not likely to be ours today, and we talk not of the "corruption of human nature," but of the "sickness of capitalist society"; and we are likely to put our newfound faith—if we have indeed found one, which is today, to be sure, not very likely—not in the Cross, but in the Hammer and Sickle.

On the whole, the spirit shared in America down to 1929 was that of the Greek Alexandrian Fathers, Clement, Origen and Athanasius: a trust in the goodwill of man, if it only be enlightened by intelligence. But in Europe men were drawing near to Augustine once more after 1914. And since the thirties even in America men have been forsaking self-reliance in droves.

There is first the pessimism, even cyni-

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cism, that has been felt so deeply since the nineteen thirties, and that certainly fills contemporary literature. To our wisdom it seems so much "deeper" and more "realistic" than Victorian complacency and faith in an almost automatic "progress." The very idea of "progress" has for a generation been in disrepute. Before 1914, our social scientists used to say, "We now hold in our hands all the knowledge necessary for us to make of our future what we will," a knowledge to be applied in our gospels of education, and in the preaching of goodwill to all. That is the promise I myself heard in my own college days, which began before 1917. When facts puncture such facile dreams, such an attitude breeds despair.

We do indeed seem to be looking at the world once more through the eyes of Augustine. And I mean not merely our theologians, who began forsaking the uncritical optimism of "liberal religion," which in Europe died in 1914, and in America was on the defensive after 1929. I mean the "realistic temper" of radicals and conservatives alike, extending far beyond those theological circles still committed to expressing that temper in the symbols of traditional religious thinking. We too find the life of man a sordid, sorry business, a struggle for power against power, to the ultimate destruction of all. We too have felt only too keenly human weakness and impotence in the face of the social and economic problems all our boasted social planning has been able to do so little to alleviate. The younger among us feel "alienated," and call for a complete "destruction" of the system they are inheriting —anything would be better than the mess the older generation has brought upon them. We are struck by the powerlessness of all our theories, all our programs for a "Great Society," the inability of even our cherished science, with its gospel of computers and automation, to bring us salvation, or to do aught but magnify the power of our human passions. We too have been feeling ourselves at the mercy of great forces, utterly beyond our control: deep-seated and seemingly ineradicable racial prejudice, virulent nationalism, the so-called "responsibilities" of our newly acquired American military power. Again and again we have seen clearly whither we were inevitably drifting—or being hurried along—but we have felt ourselves powerless to alter the course of our uncontrollable destiny. The depression, the war, the cold war, its aftermath in violent change —the domestic revolution of black power, the international insanities of our lack of a foreign policy—they have all bred the widespread conviction that we will not acquire the know-how, we will not display the will—or the imagination—to work out an intelligent and dynamic policy that will enable us to guide our collective destiny. The men who show signs of having one we shoot in alarm. We still seem content, the rest of us, to acquiesce in a course whose inevitable outcome we know. We have neither the brains, nor the will, to insist on a policy that makes more sense. We have come to feel that men have been able to learn nothing, to understand nothing—or at least, they have been able to do nothing to implement the understanding some of us have been slowly acquiring.

In the light of this seeming collapse of the intelligence we used to boast of, the intelligence the younger, alienated generation finds it so hard to credit us with, it is little wonder that for some years many of our most sensitive were tempted to turn to the miracle of grace, to something wholly outside ourselves. We could do nothing, we were sure, until it came: the end of the war, revolution, Communism, the final "destruction" of our obviously "sick" society, of the impenetrable "Liberal Establishment" on which nothing could make a dent—some such great external event would bring us salvation and power. A few, indeed, even turned for a while to a living faith, where Augustine turned himself, and millions after him, and where he gained peace and strength, and integrity of purpose, just as they too hoped to gain strength and purpose, as they watched the City of God—or the City of Moscow, or now the City of Peking—triumph over its foes.

Secondly, men have been coming to believe once more in original sin. We are con-

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vinced we are ourselves responsible for the faults of others. And we are suffering for the "inherited corruption of human nature," of our social system and its short-sighted policies. The individualist revolts, for this is a social conception; but we are now all increasingly social-minded. Today it seems a true metaphor to us to say, "All men fell in Adam"—although latterly we have been putting it, "All men fell in Adam Smith." We *are* responsible for the goings-on in the American South, and the still worse "backlash" in Northern suburbs, although we were not ourselves born when the seeds of that bitter harvest were planted. But we have acquiesced in the guilty fruits: we did nothing about it. We are responsible for World War II, for the horrors of Dresden and Hiroshima; we are responsible for the fruits of our "defense of freedom" in Vietnam. We cannot hope to keep our souls clean, even if we flee the world, and become conscientious objectors—even if we burn our draft cards and resist induction. We are responsible for that demonic force, Nationalism, and its poisonous fruits in our modern world, from the Near East to Africa and Vietnam.

The Greek Fathers would say, of course, that we cannot help it. We ourselves did not do it. We are not personally responsible. But "original sin" means that what we cannot help, and did not do ourselves, is nevertheless wrong. We *must* help it, we *must* do something about it. There is a compelling incentive to radical transformation in the sense of a common responsibility—of a common "sin." In his Augustinian emphasis on sin, Reinhold Niebuhr has been at his best in insisting that it is not just the sins of the other fellows that are to be condemned—those sins are only too easy to see. It is our own sins—not just the sins of the South, but the sins of complacent Northern "liberals," of our boasted "Liberal Establishment." It is not just the sins of the Kremlin, or of Peking, or of Cairo, or of Johannesburg, but the sins of America, of American policy—or lack of policy —of the Pentagon and the C.I.A. and the Department of State, that weigh, and should weigh, upon our souls.

Thirdly, our return to the spirit of Augustine has been hastened by the popularity of Freudian psychology, that has made dark inner conflicts seem quite normal to us. This is so, even though Freud's own mythology is quite as picturesque as Augustine's. Augustine appears to us today as a fairly typical specimen of what Freud has made so familiar. He can be said, we realize, to have founded Christianity on Freudian insights. And we see "grace" as "sublimation," "concupiscence" as the "libido," and "confession of sins" as a Freudian therapy. No wonder the wise priest smiles, and adds a few modern techniques. And our sophisticated theologians, unwilling to be out of touch with the latest fashion, have been seeking wisdom in the neurotic pages of the most "Freudian" specimen in the long line of Christian theologians, Sören Kierkegaard.

The real trouble, we have come to feel, with Augustinian Christianity, inevitable in his own day, is, first, that because Augustine had no real place for the Incarnation in his thought, he omitted the revelation of God in Jesus; and consequently there is for him no "imitation of Christ." Where the Incarnation has been taken as central in the West, that has been due, not to the influence of Augustine, but to some fresh impulse, as in Saint Francis of Assisi, or in the Quakers.

And secondly, Augustine made sin not something primarily social, but rather something sexual. This strikes us moderns as a terrible aberration. For the moral life, the sexual impulse is indeed fundamental; but the particular form sexual relations come to take is really of secondary importance. Like all other human relations, they can be ordered better or worse; and, of course, they are not something purely private and individual, as the anarchistic revolutionary is apt to proclaim, but of wide public and social concern. But to make them central in all our moral efforts seems to us moderns preposterous. We are too aware of how differently different cultures have been able to order them with reasonable success. It is especially unfortunate to try to order them in such a way that the effort to conform to

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some prescribed sexual "morality" has so often resulted in far grosser social immoralities and sins, in so much aggression and hostility and hate. Traditional and conventional Christian ethics, concentrating on sexual conduct, and stemming from Augustine, has unquestionably been an enormous distortion of values. It has strained at a gnat, but it has often been willing to swallow whole flocks of camels. This is perhaps the saddest fact of Christian history, and it certainly deserves no place in our world.

And yet—when we contemplate our modern life, our books, our plays and antiplays, our magazines and tabloids and movies and TV shows, our psychological theories, to say nothing of our actual shenanigans and goings-on—I wonder, are we really in any position to cast the first stone at Augustine for having made sex his primary moral concern?

Saint Augustine was a man converted to Christianity, and hence his whole philosophy, like that of Saint Paul, is a philosophy of conversion. The other great living Christian philosophy, the Thomism of Thomas Aquinas, is that of a man exploring his familiar and natural environment. Christianity could not possibly mean the same thing to two men of such different experience. In the Middle Ages there were in western Europe no "converts." Hence the Augustinian philosophy was then taken, not as a philosophy of salvation and conversion, for that had become an irrelevant problem, but as a philosophy of logical mysticism—actually, as what Augustine had himself been converted from, Neoplatonism, or Christian Platonism. It became in that period the Christian form that the great Platonic tradition took in the West, the Western form of the tradition of Neoplatonism. It lasted as such until the Christian humanism and naturalism of the Aristotelian Schoolmen became dominant. Then men began to be converted back to Augustine again—the heretics, the Pre-Reformers and the Reformers. The great nineteenth-century Romantic "Christian" philosophies, of Schleiermacher, Hegel, Schelling, Kierkegaard and Ritschl, came from men converted from Augustinian philosophy, in its Lutheran version, to other views: to modern humanism, to Romantic *Weltschmerz*, to humanitarianism and social reform, to collectivism.

Now, the convert is a man who feels deep needs, and has found something that satisfies them. That "something" is naturally so important for him that it overshadows everything else; it is inevitably set off by a sharp gulf from the rest of the world. Ontological dualism is thus a natural rendering of the experience of the convert: there is the Precious Thing he has found, and then there is the rest of things. "Supernaturalism" is thus a "natural" fact of experience for the convert, the "finder."

Augustine was a man of deep needs, and of very diverse needs: he felt man's weakness in so many ways. So he tested many philosophies, looking in each for deliverance and strength, and he found something in them all.

He was first a Manichaean, because he felt so keenly the moral struggle between Good and Evil. Manichaeism was in the fourth century the successor to second-century Gnosticism, or a new Persian form of that Gnosticism. Both were expressions of the strong ethical dualism of the Persian tradition. This answered Augustine's need for moral and ethical salvation. And although he later broke consciously with the Manichaean tenets, he did retain their main conviction, of the eternal gulf between Good and Evil, of the unalterable election of the few to salvation and of the many to damnation. This is Augustine's stand of *ethical dualism*.

Augustine was, secondly, a Neoplatonist, because he felt the need of the mystic to sink into the Supreme Being or Reality. He was an intellectual and logical mystic, who saw all knowledge as dependent on and leading to Supreme Truth, *Sapientia* or Wisdom. He was an ethical mystic, who saw all Good as dependent upon and leading to Absolute Goodness, the Supreme Being and Good. Anything independent of that Goodness is less "real," and therefore relatively evil. Allegiance to Supreme "Be-

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ing" is the only good, the only "life." Turning away from it is evil, death and nothingness. Augustine's conception of knowledge, and his metaphysics of Being and Good, remained fundamentally Neoplatonic. This is Augustine's strand of logical mysticism and his *metaphysical monism*—it is what the Middle Ages emphasized as the "Augustinian philosophy."

Finally, Augustine was a skeptic: man by himself is nothing, he possesses no truth, no power, no life. He is only a mass of needs. Hence Augustine felt the appeal of Authority, as the skeptic always does. This is the strand of Augustine the Churchman, the Sacramentarian, the Bishop—the very "Roman" Catholic.

Augustine was an empiricist, who tested all things in the fire of his own burning experience; he was a rationalist with a Platonic view of Truth all naked and alone; and he was an institutionalist, who fully realized the human craving for social Authority. Augustine's final philosophy embodied answers to all these diverse experiences, and responded to all these needs. Hence it is a weaving together, with marvelous subtlety, of strains that are logically quite independent, and which in most men appear as psychologically incompatible. What was so clear in Augustine's own living experience has rarely come to other men with equal force. Thus Augustine's theory of knowledge, his Christian Platonism, and his theory of grace, his Pauline doctrine of salvation, have seldom appealed with deep conviction to the same men. Those seeking above all salvation and deliverance have felt the power of the latter: Augustine's theory of grace and salvation was the very breath of life to the Reformers, and to their many late medieval predecessors. But such men remained blind to Augustine's Platonic vision of Truth. The earlier Middle Ages felt no such need of deliverance and salvation: that came as the natural operation of the unquestioned Church. What they wanted was his vision of certain knowledge, and they found it in *their* Augustine, simple, clear and certain as God Himself. So Augustine's Neoplatonic vision of Truth and Being became one of the three main streams of medieval thought.*

In saying this, it is not meant that there are necessarily "inconsistencies" in the thought of Augustine. But the connections are to be found in his rich and manifold experience, not in any unified dialectical system. Augustine did manage to formulate a philosophy that succeeded in making all his experience intelligible. In controversy, indeed, he was pushed further off from Platonism to a more dualistic, and even Manichaean and "oriental" or Persian attitude. At the end he seems near Muhammad.†

Latin Christianity in the West has hence always been a precarious thing. For men feeling only one of the needs Augustine felt so abundantly have singled it out, and have pushed the others into the background. Yet they are all human needs. Men have normally come to Augustine in search of one or another of the various ways of salvation he so bountifully offers. The very logical independence of these ways of deliverance from each other has made it possible to select from his riches that particular vehicle of salvation that would satisfy one's own craving.

Augustine is the most interesting of the Church Fathers, because he is so rich and varied, because he draws on so manifold an experience. Hence he has served as the apostle of very divergent groups. He was the great inspiration of the early Protestants, who took his experience of moral struggle and of immediate contact with God, with little need of any Mediator: he was the source of nearly all the heresies during the Middle Ages. Yet the Catholics still vigorously acclaim him, and have never been willing to give him up. For he is the great apostle of the organized Church, of institutionalism and authoritarianism. And the mystics of the Middle Ages found in

* See the writer's *Career of Philosophy in Modern Times*, Vol. I, *From the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1962), Bk. I, Chap. 3, "The Three Medieval Philosophical Traditions," pp. 23-43.

† See Augustine's writings in the anti-Pelagian controversy, which greatly influenced Calvin.

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him the great expression of mystical metaphysics and knowledge. For them, both the Church and moral struggle were pushed into the background. And finally, Augustinian Christian Platonism not only dominated the philosophy of the Schoolmen until well into the thirteenth century; reinforced by mathematics, it became the background of Cartesian rationalism in the seventeenth century, and of all the further developments of that prevailing strand in what we call "modern philosophy."

Augustine has been so influential, because he combines the two chief elements in Christianity, or, one is tempted to say, in any inclusive religion: elements always fused yet ultimately unfusable. They are often in contradiction, and always in dialectical tension with each other; yet neither can be given up—Power and Goodness, Transcendence and Immanence, Personality and Pantheism, Dualism and Monism. Augustine's ethics is dualistic, his metaphysics monistic.

In the development of Augustinian thought, there has often been a tendency for sin and salvation to become central, for Power to overshadow Goodness, as in Calvin. The monism has again and again been reinforced by fresh waves of Greek naturalism, as in Thomas Aquinas; as, following the decline of Calvinism, in eighteenth-century humanism; and as again in nineteenth-century humanitarianism. Indeed, the history of Christian thought in the West exhibits just such an alternation, between the temper of humanism, as expressed in the Alexandrian Doctors, and the temper of humility, as found in the Latin Fathers and above all in Augustine,* between self-reliance and self-abnegation. The recent swing, under Karl Barth and Neoorthodoxy, has been toward the dualistic pole. In the nineteen sixties, the pendulum seems to be going back to monism and "secularism" and humanism once again.

* For this interpretation of the history of Christian thinking, see Étienne Gilson, *Les Moralistes Chrétiens: Saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris, 1925), especially Introduction.

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The Uses of Autobiography

PETER SHAW

Of all the acts of writing, autobiography is probably the most directly useful to the author himself. For a young man it can be a way of sloughing off the past and getting on with life, while for an old man it can explain the meaning of his life to himself and to history. The modern term, autobiography, emphasizes the personal function, but the older term, "memoir," emphasized an equally important, impersonal and public use: an autobiography is a record, hence an historical document. As the novel has moved away from recording mundane social facts, autobiography, along with sociology and the movies, has taken over its historical function. At the same time, replacement of the old term, memoir, signifies a new awareness of autobiography as a form, recognizing that it has come also to share the inventiveness of the novel. But this growth of the form has not been without its difficulties.

Perhaps every writer should write two autobiographies, one handling the historically important side of his life, the other the personal: he should give us both a memoir and a "confession." Too many autobiographers have been undone by attempting to do justice both to the public and the private possibilities of the form. Henry Adams, who tried to solve the problem by sacrificing the personal, omitted the intimate scenes in his life, and left out twenty years of his life altogether in favor of including two essays on his theories of history. Yet in the end the document he produced is best remembered for its personal eccentricity. Even when the autobiographer pretends to speak in the third person, we can always hear his own voice.

But Adams' was the exceptional case, for the stronger of the two demands of autobiography is not usually the personal, as it proved to be in his case. In most lives the progress is from personal to impersonal involvements, and in famous lives, which most often get written, the end is often in public involvements, or history itself. Where we begin by seeing the world as it relates to us, we come increasingly in life to understand ourselves in relation to the world. Arrived at the time to write autobiography, one naturally feels the pull of the historical point of view that the process of maturation has led to.

The life of W.E.B. DuBois was a progress from an introspective childhood, to involvement in the cause of the American Negro, to Pan-Africanism. Looking back in his nineties from the perspective of his most broadly conceived public involvement, DuBois naturally imposed upon his autobiography the pattern of a life of ever-widening commitments. True to the actual case as this was, it brought his autobiography so close to the historical pole that one begins to read it more as a document of the Negro struggle than as the story of a personality.

But, as autobiography, no matter how flawed, will be always of use to the author, so will it be to the reader, for no matter how it is related, something of the essence of a life will always come through. This

PETER SHAW is on leave from the State University of New York at Stony Brook as an associate editor for *Commentary*.

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is not to say that the account of a great or interesting life will always be better than that of a relatively uninteresting one; but, if a man's stature be that of Bertrand Russell or W.E.B. DuBois, then the simplest account of his life will make a fine book. Certainly, there is an art of autobiography that can transform any materials into literature; it is this art that we feel when an insignificant life is made into superior autobiography. But sometimes life proves itself as important as art, and nowhere more decisively than in autobiography. Some go so far as to say that autobiography is as much dependent on art as any other literature, reasoning that a narrated life is, after all, by definition a construct, not the life itself. But the theory, although unarguable, does not account for the special double charm of autobiography: that it is at once art and a record of the actual. Nor does it account for the fact that the best autobiographies tend to be flawed more often than the best poems or the best novels. Most of the great autobiographies, especially the American ones, are either incomplete, as are the autobiographies of Cellini, Franklin, Jonathan Edwards, Mark Twain and Henry James, or else they are imperfect, like *The Education of Henry Adams,* and the autobiographies of Russell and DuBois. Because reality is one of its ingredients, autobiography has not usually found its success in the perfection of form.

W.E.B. DuBois was committed all his life to a cause. When he came to write out his life at the age of seventy, in *Dusk of Dawn,* he employed the occasion to write yet another educational work, which he subtitled, "An Essay toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept." The book assembled under the title *The Autiobiography of W.E.B. DuBois,** is, according to its editor, less of a tract than the earlier work, but its subtitle, "A Soliloquy on Viewing My Life from the Last Decade of Its First Century," belies this claim. DuBois could never refrain from attempting to educate; had he failed to do so, his autobiography would have been less characteristic than it is.

* *International Publishers. $10.*

The book opens with a statement of the author's arrival at communism in his nineties, then turns to his life, which is supposed to explain his conversion, and to show early gleamings of the late-arrived-at truth. As is inevitable in any long account of a long and varied life, the interest luckily often strays from the announced intention. And yet DuBois' radicalization always does bear on the story. This is the more remarkable as the body of the book was not all written from a late perspective, but reproduces passages written twenty and even forty years earlier—something the editor, Herbert Aptheker, misleadingly omits from his introduction. Because the progress over the nearly hundred years of DuBois' life was a steady one from seeming acceptance, to rejection, to exile, and finally entire rejection of America, the autobiography does serve to explain the essay of impassioned defense of Russia and China that precedes it.

Born and brought up in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, from 1868 to 1884, DuBois, although part of a small, long-settled, free Negro community in the town, grew up essentially with the experiences of a lower middle-class white American. With an inward personality, competitive at school, but bent on personal not social success, and with the luck to get to college—although the white fathers of the town of course sent him to the South—DuBois should have arrived at a quiet and successful life of scholarship as a college professor. But, college professor and Negro did not go together, except in the segregated colleges of the South, where DuBois eventually taught over twenty-five years at various times in his life, and there was to be no serenity for this scholarly man.

Yet, from his genteel New England childhood, through his conversions first to the American Negro cause and later to Pan-Africanism, DuBois remained, as far as one can tell from an autobiography short on self-description and self-analysis, the very opposite of a revolutionary in manner and spirit. The logic of his life pointed to militancy, and DuBois was nothing if not logical. But his manner was quiet and reason-

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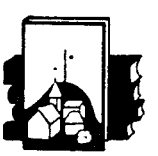

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able, his dress being tweeds and vest and a goatee modeled after Kaiser Wilhelm's. His radicalism was in his pen, but even as a radical he was essentially an elegist and a reasoner. When, near the end of his life and the end of his revolutionary road, he found himself finally in the Soviet Union, he proposed

> that the Soviet Academy of Sciences establish an institute for the study of Pan-African history, sociology, ethnography, anthropology and all cognate studies. The institute of the Academy would aim at promotion of scientific research into all the activities, past and present, of the peoples of Africa, together with a study of their physical and biological environment.

A scholar to the end, DuBois had retained his Enlightenment faith that Truth was the strongest weapon of change.

Although he intended the incidents of the autobiography to illustrate his progress from youthful idealism to a realistic appraisal of the white world, DuBois' life emerges as a series of failures sustained by an ineradicable hope. His mother's belief that work would raise up any Negro is exposed as naïve, yet her doctrine comes to mind later when he sums up his early, productive years of scholarship: "I believed in work, systematic and tireless." Still later, when, despite his work, one reverse follows another, DuBois' continued faith in work comes to seem more remarkable than the American doom to which it was subject.

His first great disappointment came when his pioneering sociological study of the Philadelphia Negro, written while he was at the University of Pennsylvania in 1897, failed to result in a permanent appointment in the department of sociology with its hoped-for opportunity to carry on his work. Soon after, the United States Labor Bureau, after commissioning further studies, took an only copy of the most important of these, and "deliberately destroyed this piece of my best sociological work." Later, at the Negro Atlanta University, he directed a different series of studies until 1911, when these too were cut off before he had neared his grand design of a systematic yearly and ten-yearly scientific examination of the entire sociology of the American Negro. From 1910 until 1934 he edited and wrote for *The Crisis* magazine of the N.A.A.C.P., which he helped to found. He called for and achieved changes in the segregation laws and the worst barbarisms of the South, only to see the Depression hurt the Negro more than all his years of liberal reformism had helped. DuBois, finally become a decided socialist, had to leave the N.A.A.C.P., in 1934.

Brought up short in the middle of his Atlanta studies by the lynching of a Negro, which suddenly showed him the gulf between the power of his pen and that of barbarism, DuBois had enlisted, through the N.A.A.C.P., in more direct agitation. After the Depression once again demonstrated that the force of his logic melted away before the vaster forces of history, he retreated back to Atlanta University. Yet, with the advent of the war he was once again devising logical, scientific and academic plans:

> There is one and only one fundamental and definitive way to meet this situation [of exacerbated racial antagonisms brought on by the war] and that is to begin a systematic study of the essential facts of the present condition of the Negro race and to establish a way of continuing and making more complete and effective such a study.

This passage is not put in quotes, so that its present tense indicates that it was inserted in the autobiography without any revision or immediate comment by DuBois to bring out its irony—for of course this study too died in its conception. It is one of several places in the book, all unnoted by the editor, evidently taken direct from DuBois' diaries, and hence lending to the autobiography the tone of hope with which DuBois lived his life rather than the despair with which he might have invested it had he gone over every page.

From this moment, at the age of seventy-six, DuBois' life described an accelerating series of rejections: by the N.A.A.C.P. again, the American Negro, the American government, the American people. Each was fed by and in turn intensified DuBois' growing

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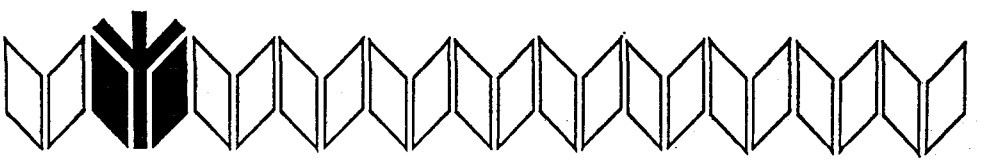

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radicalism, at which, from the perspective of autobiography, he seems destined to have arrived. Having fairly tried the resources of the American democratic process, he concluded that the fault in failing to raise up the Negro lay not with himself but with the system. Yet, so pervasive in his spirit was the optimism of that same America that he opposed, that, at any point up until his final exile when he was past ninety, had his country been willing to take him seriously, he would have been willing to go on with his work. As it was, near the end, and radicalized in the extreme (this was just two years before he joined the Communist party in 1961), his proposal to the Russians to start an African studies project was a repetition of all the hopeful academic projects of his life.

DuBois' autobiographical design characteristically pointed his reader to the future, which, he came to believe, lay with communism in Russia, China and Africa. The use to the reader of the essay that DuBois, in the manner of Henry Adams, attached to his autobiography, turns out, as with Adams, to be different from what the author intended—what is useful to the author may not coincide with what is useful to the reader. In this case, one is left not with the author's polemical message, but with wonder at the capacity of society to dash the dreams of its best spirits, and even greater wonder at the repeated renewal of hope in America.

Like Fitzgerald's Jay Gatsby, nothing could shake DuBois' faith that Knowledge and Truth, pursued for their own sakes, would somehow be of service. In 1897 he wrote:

> The phenomena of society are worth the most careful and systematic study, and whether or not this study may eventually lead to a systematic body of knowledge deserving the name of science, it cannot in any case fail to give the world a mass of truth worth the knowing.

"Be the Truth what it may," he wrote on his twenty-fifth birthday, himself capitalizing the word, "I will seek it on the pure assumption that it is worth seeking—and Heaven nor Hell, God nor Devil shall turn me from my purpose till I die." His twin resolutions on that day to dedicate himself to the cause of his people and to the cause of truth differed from those of most idealistic young men only in being an accurate prediction of his life. For it was not until the very end, in his excusing the lack of intellectual freedom in Russia and China, that he ceased to uphold the often conflicting demands of his cause and of the truth.

It is curious that a man in our time so close in spirit to the New England idealists, both in his aspirations and in a certain coolness and distance in his personality, should have been a Negro. Although he could write, on that same twenty-fifth birthday, that "the hot dark blood of a black forefather is beating at my heart," his cooler temperament was usually in control. Indeed, DuBois was more the New Englander than most white representatives of the breed, and this showed itself in his seeming, except with his immediate family, more personal in his public than in his private speech. Similarly, when he wrote, his formal academic pieces were more expressive of his personality than either the direct speech of autobiography or the musings of his diaries. His personal voice first asserted itself when, in his study of the Philadelphia Negro, he took up the academic question of scientific objectivity in sociological research:

> We must study, we must investigate, we must attempt to solve; and the utmost that the world can demand is, not lack of human interest and moral conviction, but rather the heart-quality of fairness and an earnest desire for the truth despite its possible unpleasantness.

In contrast to this, the style of the autobiography seems flat and matter of fact; it too often slips into the tone of a commercial testimonial, acknowledging favors, listing the members of committees and their contributions, or else shifts to a vantage on his life less intimate even than DuBois would have taken if writing a biography of someone else. Some of this is the result of the piecing together of passages written from different points of view and over a

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long period of time, but mostly it is the result of a preponderant pull from the historical pole of autobiography.

If history took away from DuBois the chance to lead a quiet life by emphasizing his race, it also gave him, as he slowly discovered, a special insight. And just as he learned that the problem of his minority was the central problem of the country, and came to believe that the exploitation of the darker races was the key to the history of the twentieth century, his life of rejection, disappointments, constant hope and final exile seems an epitome of the American Negro experience.

It is a comment upon our age that the scion of an English noble family, eminent in his field, and known throughout the world, should have been progressively alienated from society just as surely as was a victim of American race prejudice. And, although he was jailed as a pacifist in his own country in 1917, Bertrand Russell, as did DuBois, found in the 1960's probably the last object of his dissent in the United States, where he had been vilified twenty years earlier for living with a woman out of matrimony.

Starting in different countries at the two ends of society, DuBois and Russell were moved to opposition by a similar relentless logicality in their makeups. They came equally to be marginal, unassimilated characters, looking at the world from what seemed to the world a distorted perspective. Neither seemed to know the "right people" late in his life, as great men should, and each finally was known to pacifists, communists and world governmentalists better than he was either to the public at large or to fellow intellectuals. Of course, Bertrand Russell has always been very famous, but not in his contentious and reformist self, which the world has successfully avoided by paying excessive homage to the philosopher.

At present it is fashionable to say that Russell's war crimes tribunal was farcical because it was both impotent and prejudiced. His sporadic peace letters to world leaders have become a joke to many: Russell is senile, it is said, and under the sinister control of his secretary. I have no way of knowing Russell's present mental condition, but I am struck, in reading his autobiography,* at how similar the current raillery is to that heaped on him during the First World War, when he was a pacifist, and at how constant have been the sophisticated contortions of argument with which he has all his life been dismissed for his views, which have seemingly been always equally ill-timed.

It is true that there has usually been something in Russell's positions too absolute for the ordinary modern sensibility, overwhelmed as it is with the ambiguities of existence, to support. "One day in October 1914," Russell tells us,

> I met T. S. Eliot on New Oxford Street. I naturally asked him what he thought of the war. "I don't know," he replied, "I only know that I am not a pacifist." That is to say, he considered any excuse good enough for homicide.

What can one say to this? Like most of Russell's arguments it is logically unanswerable. Accordingly, the usual recourse with Russell has been to comment upon rather than directly deal with his contentions. "Yes, of course this is a breach of international law and commonly accepted morality, but . . ."

But we know that we are evading him, and so finally turn to the observation that he is lacking in human warmth, that he is the cold logician, merely. Russell's autobiography reveals how mistaken this impression is, but it also shows how Russell's attitude toward himself, which has been as ruthlessly clear as his attitude toward the world, can have given such an impression. One finds in his life story, passions, doubts, enthusiasms and fears; what distinguishes him is his objective treatment of these. Out at sea and in difficulties in his love affair with Dora Black, Russell writes:

> I suggested to her that we had made a mistake in coming away together, and that the best way

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out would be to jump into the sea. This mood, however, which was largely induced by the heat, soon passed.

The word "suggested," and the ascription of his mood to the weather, have a misleading way of transferring the disillusioned clarity of age to the incident from Russell's comparative youth. But it would be as great a mistake to suppose that Russell coolly "suggested" suicide as it would be to think that Henry Adams went through life in the mood of despair with which he narrated his autobiography. As the Adams tone concealed success, Russell's conceals that the shipboard scene presents only one of many references to suicide in the autobiography. Here and there, Russell reports having had thoughts of it as a boy, as a student, as a lover, and finally as a husband threatening his first wife with it if she should expose his affair with Lady Ottoline Morrell. Russell's blinding rationality, one begins to realize, was the rage for order of a bedeviled personality, and his tone of rational philosophical detachment tells a story punctuated by periods of skepticism and despair.

But, as Russell would say, his pessimism was a temporary philosophical position; toward his own life, as his cool, observing manner shows, he always sustained the ultimate optimism—that he could understand it. The first volume of his life covers the forty-two years from 1872 to 1914. His upbringing by his grandparents, mostly his grandmother, Lady Georgiana Russell, and his adolescent gropings are given first in two short chapters. These are followed by schooling at Cambridge, and then a long chapter called "Principia Mathematica," referring to Russell's important collaboration with Whitehead, but actually concerned largely with his first marriage, first affair, and first divorce, although there is a good deal on his friendships with Whitehead, Wittgenstein (Russell's pupil), and other philosophers. The second volume comes down to 1944, but dilates on the First World War and then quickly narrates his trip to Russia in 1920, and his travels in China and the United States; there is also a brief account of Russell's attempt to run a children's school during the twenties with his second wife, Dora Black. As in the first volume, the account is fleshed out at the end of each chapter, as several reviewers have complained, with a selection of letters. In the first volume, many are Russell's own letters; in the second, most are written to him.

Like the autobiography of DuBois, Russell's is a compilation of passages written, one gathers, at various times between about 1932 and 1952, with some notes as late as 1967. Again, this is not made clear, nor is it even mentioned that many passages are taken from earlier books, notably *Portraits From Memory*. This is a deception that does not sit well with Russell's usual rigorous truthfulness, and it is one that tends to lend color to the rumor that he is no longer his own man. But the fragmented composition does not, in fact, harm this book, since Russell's style was so consistent throughout his life. Had the facts of composition been made clear, the book's remarkable evenness of style would only have given the reader an added pleasure. As for the letters, which have been said to break up the continuity, they serve two purposes. In the first volume, the narration depends for much of its force on the conviction that Russell is being absolutely truthful, and the letters nicely supply this. In the second volume, where the only disappointment is that Russell has not written enough, they are welcome amplifications. Also, when one realizes that the letters to Russell as surely reflect his personality as those by him, they come to seem much more organically related to the autobiography than at first. Wittgenstein, "perhaps the most perfect example I have ever known of genius as traditionally conceived, passionate, profound, intense, and dominating," alone in an Austrian village teaching school after the first war, "would write to me saying: 'The people of Trattenbach are very wicked.' I would reply, 'Yes, all men are very wicked.' He would reply, 'True, but the men of Trattenbach are more wicked than the men of other places.'" As usual, Russell makes it all seem more simple-

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minded than it was, as Wittgenstein's actual letters show, but the point comes through that you didn't think loosely when addressing Russell. Writing or talking to him would be something like writing or talking to the President. One is himself, if he has any dignity about it, but is at the same time the essence of one's self—the person at his most interesting, and, in the case of dealing with Russell, at his wittiest, if possible.

In an appendix to the chapter on his adolescence, consisting of a journal called "Greek Exercises" written when he was sixteen, there appears the earliest example of Russell's style:

> 1888. March 3. I shall write about some subjects which now interest me. I have in consequence of a variety of circumstances come to look into the very foundations of the religion in which I have been brought up. On some points my conclusions have been to confirm my former creed, while on others I have been irresistibly led to such conclusions as would not only shock my people, but have given me much pain.

Needless to say, his speculations ended in atheism, with a sense of relief rather than loss after the casting off of faith. What is remarkable is that his method of inquiry, and his style of expression were all continuous with Russell's habits throughout his life, and the subject, an obvious one, with only two propositions to choose from as to truth—either God did or did not exist—was the sort of subject that Russell usually tackled. "Now in finding reasons for believing in God I shall only take account of scientific arguments," the young Russell wrote, and the words were nearly the same as those that were to appear in his *Our Knowledge of the External World.*

Throughout his life Russell has remained concerned with the simple, profound questions of existence that trouble an adolescent: this has been the mark of the philosopher in him. And throughout his life, too, these questions that the rest of us soon stop asking have continued to give him much pain. The wit and candor with which he first went at logical problems early in his career, and later tackled the questions of marriage, children, and human happiness, were always accompanied by the adolescent's desperate need to understand these things. It is not surprising, then, that the objective balancing of arguments in his youthful journal ends just as many stages of his life as a philosopher were to end: "It is difficult not to become reckless and commit suicide, which I believe I should do but for my people."

In recalling this period Russell says that he refrained from committing suicide "because I wished to know more of mathematics." Here, as in the case of DuBois, lack of care in putting the autobiography together becomes a benefit, revealing as it does how much more emotional a person Russell was than even he realized. Yet what was remarkable was not so much the intensity of his emotionalism, but the alternation in his nature between the two poles of logic and feeling toward one or the other of which most lives tend to be drawn. After he had threatened suicide, his wife's "rage became unbearable."

> After she had stormed for some hours, I gave a lesson in Locke's philosophy to her niece, Karin Costelloe, who was about to take her tripos.

There is no reason to believe either that his threat of suicide was touched by reasoning calculation or that the philosophy lesson suffered from any residue of emotion.

This ability to shift abruptly from one state of mind to another seems to have been the emotional equivalent of Russell's childlikeness. Wordsworth's belief that the child is the divine philosopher has its prophecy fulfilled in Russell, whose life, philosophical works and autobiography all sustain a child's fascination with the basic phenomena of the world.

The continuity lies in Russell's profound simplicity, which was mirrored by an unaffected simplicity in personal style and by the simple clarity of his prose in all his books. Writing of the future of modern philosophy in 1929, Russell outlined his method of thought:

> Our initial data . . . suffer from vagueness, confusion, and complexity. Current philosophical ideas share these defects: it is therefore necessary to create an apparatus of precise concep-

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tions as general and as free from complexity as possible, before the data can be analysed . . .

Always the effort of his mind was to reduce to simplest terms; in the autobiography, the effect is to make his life into a series of almost incredibly simple discoveries. As a teen-ager, having been told "that all introspection is morbid," he concluded, "after two or three years of introspection," that "it ought not to be condemned as morbid." In about 1898, "it was an intense excitement, after having supposed the sensible world unreal, to be able to believe again that there really were such things as tables and chairs." In 1901, "as I was riding along a country road, I realized that I no longer loved Alys," his first wife. In August 1914, "I discovered to my amazement that average men and women were delighted at the prospect of war"; then, looking back upon his First World War pacifism, "When, in 1940, England was threatened with invasion, I realized that, throughout the first war, I had never seriously envisaged the possibility of utter defeat." Finally, while deathly ill in China in 1921:

> Lying in my bed feeling that I was not going to die was surprisingly delightful. I had always imagined until then that I was fundamentally pessimistic and did not greatly value being alive. I discovered that in this I had been completely mistaken, and that life was infinitely sweet to me. . . I have known ever since that at bottom I am glad to be alive. Most people, no doubt, always know this, but I did not.

More concerned with certainty than subtlety, Russell, although in some instances he is making fun of his former self, is by and large unembarrassed to arrive at a simple truth, which he has always taken to be preferable to a complex possibility.

The truth is, of course, a dry category, and had Russell merely been right many times in his life, the story of his life would be of little use to either him or his readers. But because his discoveries were so bound up with the crises of belief in his times, they command attention. Russell struggled out of Victorianism—not the metaphorical kind, but the real thing—through nine years of sexual abstinence in his first marriage. He involved himself in the basic questions of war, sex, marriage, child raising, and, finally, the meaning of existence (which he was wise enough not to approach directly). His life has been exemplary because, as he experienced Europe's mad wish for destruction that resulted in the First World War, and then witnessed the rest of the century's horrors, his progressive abandonment of hope that man could improve his condition coincided with the abandonment of optimism that is the mark of modern times. At the same time, his confidence in himself, and his joy in his own existence, point to the only hopeful view of existence that is still available to us.

The two old men, Russell and DuBois, if they eventually went a step beyond where most could follow them, did so, as their autobiographies show, as logical extensions of their lives, in which their worst suppositions about the world always proved true. Both devoted their lives to stating simply what they saw to be true, and both were tormented by hysterical prejudice. Russell has had fewer illusions about the efficacy of reason, yet suffered no fewer shocks than DuBois, since an intelligent man will be always surprised by the issues over which the narrow-minded will become hysterical.

The legatees of these two uncompromising aristocrats seem to be today's protesting youth. Like them, young people today insist on speaking out on inequities that have long been clear to all, but that few have thought to shout about.

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Reviewed by KAI T. ERIKSON

Marston Bates, a distinguished field biologist, devotes this lively new book to a long

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KAI T. ERIKSON, who teaches sociology at Yale University, is currently a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford, California. He is the author of *Wayward Puritans: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance.*

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GEORGE HENRY LEWES AS LITERARY CRITIC

by Alice R. Kaminsky

"Wherever he went," an acquaintance said of him, "there was a patch of intellectual sunshine in the room." George Bernard Shaw called him "the most able and brilliant critic between Hazlitt and our own contemporaries." In his lifetime Lewes was also journalist, editor, novelist, dramatist, actor, biographer, scientist, philosopher, and psychologist. Yet the modern world has remembered him primarily for his relationship with George Eliot, with whom he lived for nearly twenty-five years.

This is the first full study of Lewes as a critic and of his influence on the nineteenth century English literary scene. The reader will find it unusually rewarding.

Professor Kaminsky skillfully sets the stage in her introductory chapter, in which she highlights Lewes's personality and his personal and professional life. Thereafter her concern is with his critical work. She discusses his theory of literary criticism against the background of his philosophical position, and then examines in lucid detail, in successive chapters, "Lewes on Poetry," "Lewes as a Critic of the Novel," and "Lewes as a Drama Critic." Her concluding chapter provides a thoughtful assessment of Lewes's place in nineteenth century criticism.

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and reflective look at the human animal in an effort to see if he can discern what is "natural" in man's behavior. He discovers, as he knew he would, that natural man is forever hidden from sight behind a thick tissue of custom and habit and ritual, and so the greater part of the book shifts into a discussion of human culture and the curious ways in which men learn to behave.

Professor Bates is concerned here with an old and important question. Man is both a product of his animal nature and a creature of his own invention—and students of human life have long wondered to what extent man's conduct can be attributed to his biological state and to what extent it can be understood as a response to cultural conditioning. The question, of course, is basically unanswerable, since it is presumably "natural" for men to form cultural units and since there are no viable ways to differentiate the jurisdiction of nature from the jurisdiction of culture; but the question has intrigued thinkers for many years and has sometimes provoked an almost extravagant kind of speculation and myth. Bates approaches the matter calmly and reasonably. He concludes that there is very little in man's conduct that can be traced directly to his animal nature and that the only way a biologist or anyone else can come to terms with man as a species is to consider the cultural milieu in which he lives.

Bates then tells us something about the extraordinary range of behavior one finds across the map of human culture, drawing on observations made during a lifetime of travel and a wide acquaintance with the more general literature on the subject. He muses about the ways men organize their lives in respect to food and sex, clothing and shelter; the ways they teach one another to feel repulsed by certain foods, to hate certain neighbors, to be irritated by certain manners. Bates is sometimes amused by man's pretentions, sometimes alarmed by his capacity for destruction, sometimes puzzled by the inconsistencies of his behavior. But he has a deep respect for the richness of human experience, and he manages by the sheer humanity and generosity of his observations to make readers feel uneasy about their own cultural biases without once lecturing to them.

In some respects, the main difficulty of the book is that Bates is forced by the nature of his subject to operate on two different planes at once. The book opens, appropriately enough, on a biological plane in which Bates is very much at home, but the momentum of his argument carries him farther and farther away from his professional base into regions that are somewhat more distant. In the process, Bates sometimes moves rather casually through terrains that have been more thoroughly explored by specialists in other disciplines, and it should perhaps be noted that he does not always pay much attention to the information found in those sources and does not always warn us that the authorities he is citing are sometimes regarded as controversial in their own professional backyards. But it is a measure of Bates' engaging style and his balanced perspective that complaints from that quarter are likely to be dissolved in the general good humor and intelligence of the book.

The picture of man that emerges from these pages is a remarkable one. From a biological point of view, man is the least economical of all animals: he refuses nourishing food even when it is immediately available to him, he engages in sexual activities that are simply exorbitant when seen as a device to assure reproduction, he spoils the resources of the environment in which he lives, and in general he engages in a form of waste that no other species could even begin to afford. Man is also the meanest of animals: he is the only one that kills, cripples, imprisons and misuses those of his own kind, and he is the only one that is capable of being pointlessly cruel. And man is surely the silliest of animals: he is full of postures and pufferies that appear to have no relation whatever to the requirements of surviving in the environment.

Bates concludes that none of this makes very much "natural" sense. It does not lend itself to any visible logic (or at least to any visible bio-logic) and it endangers the species in ways only too easy to imagine. There

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are a number of other logics available that offer some perspective on the matter, of course—psycho-logics, socio-logics, ethno-logics—but Bates does not seem overly impressed by them, and specialists in those areas will have to be content with the thought that someone with the skills of a Marston Bates may write as good a book on them someday.

If my own experience serves as a guide, readers who are already acquainted with the general subject matter of this book will not learn much that is new to them; but they will find the familiar material arranged in a way that is sensible and humane, and they will put the book down with the feeling that they have spent four or five hours in the company of a very engaging man. Readers who are approaching the subject for the first time, however, will be informed, entertained and highly rewarded for their effort.

Malraux and Metamorphosis

ANTI-MEMOIRS. *By André Malraux. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. $8.95.*

Reviewed by EARL ROVIT

Humanism does not consist in saying, "No animal could have done what we have done," but in declaring: "We have refused to do what the beast within us willed to do, and we wish to rediscover Man wherever we discover that which seeks to crush him to the dust." True, for a religious-minded man this long debate of metamorphosis and rediscoveries is but an echo of a divine voice, for man becomes truly Man only when in quest of what is most exalted in him.

This excerpt from the concluding paragraphs of André Malraux's *The Voices of Silence* strikes the thematic chord, it seems to me, of almost everything he has written and done, including his most recent—and, in some ways, most perplexing—book, *Anti-Memoirs*. And if we discern in that thematic passage strong vestiges of that Jansenist strain of Catholicism that is reminiscent of Pascal, we must also recognize the vibrant emphasis on resistance and activism that calls to mind the flexible militancy of Albert Camus. Throughout his long and brilliant career Malraux has successfully eluded any but the broadest of categories and labels. To be sure, he is a Romantic, but who is not? He professes the principles of humanism, but who, today, claims misanthropy? *Anti-Memoirs* is the most personal statement of assessment and belief that Malraux has yet made, and, as such, this book makes rather special demands on its readers. Just as Malraux's novels are peculiarly something other than novels, and just as his essays on art are something other than art history and criticism, so this "memoir" will inevitably disappoint the unwary reader who expects a conventional autobiographical recapitulation of an adventurous life or a mellowed backward glance o'er traveled roads.

To begin with, it is only fair to admit that any critical appraisal of *Anti-Memoirs* will be marked by an ineluctable note of presumption on the part of the reviewer. Malraux's range of activities and informed interests has been awesomely wide and deep. His extraordinarily active political life began in 1922 with his enlistment in the Young Annam League in Indochina and led to successive involvements in the Chinese Revolution in Canton and Shanghai, in the Spanish Civil War, in the French Resistance, culminating in his present position as Minister of Cultural Affairs in the De Gaulle Cabinet. His archaeological achievements in the excavations and studies of ancient civilizations in the Middle and Far East would be sufficient in themselves to insure him an academic importance. As an art historian and aesthetician ex officio, his books, *The Voices of Silence* and *The Metamorphosis of the Gods,* have exerted a powerful influence on the sensibility of our age, especially in terms of Malraux's persuasive notions of "metamorphosis" and "the imaginary museum." And finally, of course, he has occupied a privileged position since the 1920's in the vanguard of

EARL ROVIT's article, "On the Contemporary Apocalyptic Imagination," appeared in the Summer, 1968, SCHOLAR. He is the author of the novels *The Player King* and *A Far Cry.*

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French and European literary life as a major novelist-spokesman of our time. All these accomplishments place the material of *Anti-Memoirs* rather securely beyond the reach of assumed expertise that the reviewer can bring to bear on this volume. The cloistered intellectual is awed by Malraux the political adventurer. The man of affairs is witless before Malraux the aesthete and metaphysician. And the writer or belletrist knows not what to do with an artist like Malraux who seems so dispassionate and uncommitted to his own art. Thus, I should think that any honest reviewer must first concede himself guilty of presumption in daring to appraise the complexity of *Anti-Memoirs,* because in this book Malraux attempts to comprehend all his roles at once—attempts, that is, to find a form that will be adequate to the polymorphous nuances of his singular and astonishingly single career.

To this end, *Anti-Memoirs* takes the form of a seemingly capricious journal. Events are narrated without respect for chronology. Excerpts from Malraux's previous writings and public speeches are juxtaposed against sharp reportorial transcriptions of interviews and conversation. Impressionistic responses to landscape are threaded between passages of straight exposition, philosophic speculation, and the kind of encyclopedic gusto for anecdote that one finds in Victorian travel books. The initial effect of this prose bouillabaisse is quite alarming and even discouraging. The style seems terribly clotted; the chain of argumentation and logical transition nonexistent. And the personality of the author seems remote, affected, and too-wearily bored with the reader for any effective rapport to take place. Yet there appears to be a careful structuring of this disparate material around a few cardinal events in Malraux's life: his formal associations with certain major political figures (among them, Trotsky, De Gaulle, Nehru and Mao); his dizzying brush with death in an airplane above the Arabian Desert; a claustrophobic nightmare experience in a tank trap in the early days of World War II; his imprisonment by the Nazis and his expectations of torture at their hands when he is captured as a leader of the Resistance; the suicide of his father and the death of his grandfather; and a collection of powerful eidetic images of landscape from the Middle and Far East, and tombs and ritual funerary objects from all over the world.

Clearly these recollections comprise a far-from-random constellation in Malraux's mind. They each possess for Malraux a dynamic quality that evokes a sense of permanence within the flux of merciless change—a permanence that Malraux believes to be coexistent with change through the process of what he calls "metamorphosis." To put it as simply as possible, *Anti-Memoirs* is an obsessive and unceasing dialogue between Malraux and death—a muted but relentless attempt to "rediscover Man wherever we discover that which seeks to crush him to the dust." For Malraux is convinced that the force that creates what is "most exalted" in man is always death, although the guises that it wears may be as various as time, nature, fear, torture, bestiality, lust, fatigue or torpor. Man's spontaneous and unmediated resistance to this force—whether manifest in art or politics—is what makes him Man and gives him worth. Hence this dialogue is built on a single repetitive theme with innumerable variations in *Anti-Memoirs* and the reader gradually comes to realize that Malraux's own life-experiences are almost irrelevant to his pursuit of this "quest." Thus, an anecdote, an event described at second- or third-hand, an *objet d'art,* or an historical analogy will serve as well as anything that actually happened to André Malraux to illuminate some portion of the dialogue. What or whom he has personally loved or lost, what he has given up of himself or taken away from others—almost the entire realm of interpersonal relationships—is not even hinted at in this, his book of life. A remarkable memoir, in which the traditional "me" has the cold austerity of a finely-ground lens!

As I have elsewhere argued, the journal form has enjoyed a miraculous rebirth (Malraux would say "metamorphosis") in our time. We have had "confessional" poetry and fiction like Lowell's and Bel-

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low's and Nabokov's; "confessional" motion pictures like Fellini's and Bergman's; surrealistic confessions like Burroughs'; unautobiographical autobiographies like Niccolo Tucci's *Before My Time*. Somehow the "confessional" form seems to be superseding the "identity-quest" as a structural framework in many products of our modern creativity. But it has done this only after enduring a magical sea change. The *Self*—that historical conjunction of the *moi social* and the *moi profond*—is no longer the quixotic target of the introspective creator. The modern artist seems less and less professionally concerned with the search for and exposure of some inmost sense of psychological or spiritual being that dominates and programs his life. Instead he has generally come to accept—with moods ranging from desperate resignation to manic joy—the notion that any revelation of Self will necessarily be a fiction, a rhetorical flourish of false identity, another artful role to be played on top of the striated levels of role-playing that are the accumulated sum of his personality. And so the journal form—the inherently confessional dialogue that literate man carries on with himself in his solitude—has emerged in a dramatically different way. What had a tendency to be the most private of pursuits has become public; what was the most rational and logical of dialectics has geared itself to the irrationality of psychodrama; and what was once a ritual examination performed to reveal and exorcise guilt or shame has become melded to the satisfaction of a curiously impersonal pride.

Malraux's *Anti-Memoirs* falls into this contemporary "confessional" genre, I believe. His deliberate employment of the journal form makes its obeisance to Gide and Proust and the Bergsonian concept of the *idée durée,* but, at least of equal importance, it looks forward to this newer and yet uncharted form. Although Malraux keeps reverting to a handful of (not always convincing) crucial recollections, unlike Proust's "involuntary memories," his memories are always controlled and without spontaneity. Malraux's persona in *Anti-Memoirs* has the static quality of a theatrical caricature; *being* does not exist in the indelibilities of his memories. But the reason for this is not the failure of his art. Malraux simply does not believe in that kind of permanence. The dual temporality of memories (their simultaneous appearance in multiple levels of time) persuades him that permanence, if it exists at all, can only be a product of unending metamorphosis—the ever-changing of the changeless. In this context, it follows that Malraux's personal self is incidental to his "memoirs." It is the transactions of that self with the objects of its inquiry that will be the material and end of metamorphosis.

If we bear this point closely in mind, it becomes possible, I think, to understand that the determination (or rationalization) of Malraux's political ideals is ultimately artistic and metaphysical. The European imagination has been a classically restless and dissatisfied imagination in its political projections. For half a millenium it negotiated uncomfortably between its empirically imperfect social reality and its aspirations of perfection. Among other things, it dreamed a New World; it colonized it, peopled it, and provided it with a set of ideals (equal rights to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness") that were designed to fulfill the aspirations that Europe denied itself. When ideas become incarnated into historical reality, however, they are always disillusioning to the dreamer in some degree. Malraux, like Jung and Hesse with whom he shares some important passions and revulsions, is a representative of the European political dreamer for whom the New World is a dead end. And dead, precisely because it is new! Not new beginnings but rediscoveries fascinate and beguile his type of political imagination. Malraux looks backward in order to leap forward in time. The ruin is his forcing bed. The ancient cultures of the Middle and Far East, the ponderous weight of centuries where billions live and die in an uncomplaining harmony with death and time, the image of Man in a serene spiritual collectivity—these are what Malraux searches for as the materials of his ideal "new world." And thus we find a common element in his near

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idolatry of De Gaulle, Nehru and Mao. Each of these political giants is, for Malraux, far more than the embodiment of a charismatic leader or a political position or a mass group of devoted followers. They are, for him, in their very persons France, India and China—nations that exist not only in time, but in a mystical permanence outside of time. As leaders they are the living heirs of great monolithic entities realized again and again in their nation's art, architecture, and ritual convulsions of birth and death. Malraux's faith in the concept of "nations"—a concept that he is careful to dissociate from nationalism—is a faith in cultural metamorphosis—in utopias emerging from the old rather than being grafted upon the new.

I would suggest that in the last resort Malraux's political career is explainable only in terms like these. Even when he was an early student of Marxist-Leninism, his passion for social justice was always more important than any concern for individualism. And with the passage of time, while he seems as ready as he ever was to resist what he considers tyranny, it has become more and more difficult for him to identify some kinds of authoritarian order as tyrannies. In other words, social justice has become a subordinate goal for him in comparison with that subjective feeling of solidarity which he thinks he finds in some peoples—a metaphysical and, quite possibly, mythic feeling that imbues the people of a nation with the strength to resist death by ascribing a meaning to life that makes death negligible because it includes it. Ultimately, that is, Malraux's researches in the tombs of the Pharaohs, his broodings at Lascaux, his excavations of Khmer statuary and his conceptualization of an "imaginary" museum of all the world's art are at one with his political espousement, his novels, his romantic adventuring, and even his restoration of the facades of Paris. In each case, his purpose is the same: to rediscover some latent value of the past and attempt to be an agent in its metamorphosis and, hence, continued life. *Anti-Memoirs* is a very difficult book. I suspect that it will be praised and criticized strenuously, but I fear that both the praise and the criticism may lack the patience to deal with the book on its own terms. It seems to me, however, an extremely significant and provocative book, entirely worthy of the writer whom the Nobel Prize committee has inexcusably passed over for the last twenty years.

Wealth in America

THE RICH AND THE SUPER-RICH: A Study in the Power of Money Today. *By Ferdinand Lundberg. Lyle Stuart. $12.50.*

Reviewed by ASHER LANS

It would be easy for a skilled academician to accumulate fifty pages of nit-picking criticisms of Lundberg's eight hundred pages, analogous to a cautious professor's emendations on the first draft of an overambitious doctoral dissertation. An acerbic *Times* review by George Stigler of the University of Chicago has also noted fallacies of exaggeration and reliance on scattered shreds of evidence. Stylistically, *The Rich and the Super-Rich* resembles one of Thomas Wolfe's later novels. It is torrential, too long, at points factually erroneous, and often prone to oversimplification in its analysis of the control of industry and of the industrial state's relationship with political government.

Yet, on balance, these faults are minor. Lundberg writes not for the academic specialists in the half-dozen areas he seeks to interrelate, but for the intelligent citizen concerned about the welfare of the Republic. He makes a notable contribution in the tradition of Lincoln Steffens, Michael Harrington and J. K. Galbraith. I believe this is an immensely important and provocative popularization of insufficiently noticed tendencies in the political economy.

The master themes are the continued concentration of wealth in the United States, the recent resumption of a tendency

ASHER LANS is an attorney practicing in New York and specializing in corporate law. He is a former lecturer in economics at Hunter College and Brooklyn College, and a coauthor of a forthcoming book on the antitrust laws.

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toward greater percentile amassment of capital by the minority at the top, the techniques by which redistribution and equalization have been aborted, and the retention of substantial control by inherited rentiers in alliance with a new generation of technological entrepreneurs. Lundberg's data are secondary and not novel; his conclusion that the "managers" or the "meritocrats" principally remain agents rather than the possessors of ultimate power is a sharply presented original thesis.

Lundberg begins by summarizing the recent scholarship on the distribution of wealth. Recent studies by Professor Robert J. Lampman of the University of Wisconsin, the University of Michigan Survey Research Center, the Internal Revenue Service and the Federal Reserve System have all concluded that approximately thirty percent of the individually owned assets and equities belongs to the upper 1.6 percent of the adult population. The concentration of ownership is especially marked in corporate stocks and bonds. (The only common investment medium relatively eschewed by the affluent is the United States government bond; perhaps, like Governor Agnew of Maryland, the rich regard Treasury securities as a dubious investment.)

The Panglossian belief that there has been a decline in economic inequality in recent decades is untrue. While the percentage of wealth owned by the upper one percent declined sharply from 1929 to 1949, it has increased almost to its original level in the ensuing twenty years. This presumed illustration of a Pareto-like fundamental law of unchangeable economic inequality may, however, principally reflect the behavior of the stock market. For decades past, a preponderance of the capital of the rich has been invested in common stocks. Since 1950, the secular trend of industrial stock price indexes has been sharply upward, just as in the 1920's, which was the last period of increasing concentration of wealth. (It is a curious commentary on the lack of identity between personal economic interest and ideological conviction that the rich continue to decry the mild inflation that seems to trigger the rise in stock prices and the resultant increase in their fortunes.)

Inheritance is described as the bedrock of the very rich's affluence. "There is less and less room at the top for new money-makers. . . . All the big bets seem to be down." (p. 31) The author asserts that substantially all the largest fortunes—those of the Rockefellers, Du Ponts, Mellons, Fords and similar families—originated prior to the First World War.

Time has diffused wealth among the members of these groupings to younger generations, although aggregate family property has augmented. A chapter entitled "The Great Tax Swindle" brilliantly describes the statutory loopholes and adroit planning that have been utilized to nullify the impact of the income and inheritance tax laws.

Lundberg shows that the oligarchic elite of the past has perpetuated itself and will probably sustain its position for at least two generations. His contention in *The Rich and the Super-Rich* that no new great fortunes have developed in recent decades (or are likely to arise in the future) is contradicted by his own past and present evidence. In *America's 60 Families,* the same author in 1937 suggested that the only noteworthy postwar fortunes belonged to the Chrysler and Odlum families; it was pessimistically (and, as it turned out, erroneously) suggested that Chrysler might not emerge unscathed from competition with the older and larger General Motors and Ford companies. By way of contrast, *The Rich and the Super-Rich* utilizes other studies to adduce the names of approximately seventy "big new-wealth-holders" in the period since 1945.

The point is of key importance, for a society that preserved large fortunes from the past without permitting the development of new centers of wealth would be a capitalism of mortmain. Moreover, it remains feasible for relatively new businesses to grow to giant size. The available data seem to show that the percentage of total corporate assets and income secured by the very largest corporations has not increased over the last fifty years, but that there has been a material change in the identity of the big-

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gest firms. For instance, in 1937 Lundberg described General Telephone and IBM as the 187th and 185th largest corporations, respectively; in 1964, they are, respectively, ranked by him as 11th and 12th. Since 1945, a whole series of new enterprises have risen from obscurity (or nonexistence) to great power; the list includes Litton, Texas Industries, Xerox, Gulf and Western, Reynolds Metals and Kaiser Aluminum.

There is an equally significant reflection on fluctuations in economic power. The author of *America's 60 Families* treated the private bank of J. P. Morgan and Company as the most powerful group in American industry; the firm is scarcely mentioned in the present work. The investment banker, as kingmaker for the economy, has been interred, *sub silentio.*

The brilliant chapter devoted to "Crime and Wealth" points out that the old large fortunes and the companies where they were earned battened on continued monopolistic practices. (The key role of land ownership is ignored.) Edwin Sutherland's *White Collar Crime* is extensively cited to show that most of the older established giant corporations have been repeatedly guilty of violation of federal regulatory legislation. I do not wish to labor the point, but much of the recent affluence has resulted from bringing new technology to the stage of commercial development or from the always risky business of wildcatting for petroleum.

Of greater importance is Lundberg's contribution to the debate as to whether the continuing concentration of wealth has been accompanied by a separation of ownership from effective control over the larger corporations. The issue was framed in 1932 by Adolf A. Berle, Jr., and Gardiner C. Means in *The Modern Corporation and Private Property,* which suggested that the increasing fractional distribution of shares among small stockholders and control of the proxy machinery placed boards of directors in position to perpetuate their control, free of interference from the absentee owners. In later books Professor Berle has contended that the growth of equity ownership in mutual funds and pension trusts (which traditionally abstain from participation in corporate policy making) has increased management autonomy, while the ability to generate cash from internal sources, such as retained earnings and depreciation allowances, has freed management from control by the financial marketplace. Until recently, the Berle and Means thesis has been almost universally accepted; *America's 60 Families* described their work as "epochal."

Lundberg now suggests that "What Berle-Means did, initiating the fantasy, was to confuse control with operating direction. Company managers . . . . are always in charge of operations, by tacit or explicit leave of the big owners. The issue of control is seldom raised. But when it is, . . . the nonowning management walks the plank." (p. 245) Utilizing his own analysis of Securities and Exchange Commission reports and other documents, the author identifies the single family or "functionally related financial group" which, he states, controls one hundred and fifteen of the two hundred and two largest corporations. He suggests that "groups consisting of as many as five to seven families" or similar small cliques control every other large firm.

The hardheaded author dismisses as subordinate other alleged independent power elites, such as the "technostructure," celebrated in Galbraith's *The New Industrial State,* as nonprofit-oriented, professional management, seeking to discharge a communal responsibility. Similarly, he regards "the warlords"—the military chieftains who C. Wright Mills held were a new top power group—as mere "representatives of power, held in reserve by others." (p. 444)

For true autonomous authority can only be possessed by individuals who hold nondismissable positions and whose cooperation is requisite to the adoption and implementation of important policies. He analogizes to the history of the atom bomb. Presumably neither President Roosevelt nor President Truman understood nuclear physics; both relied upon scientific, military and political advisers. Yet the decisions to make, and then to use, the bomb could only be made by one man.

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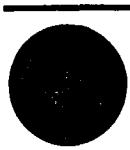

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Lundberg believes that, apart from the big owners, ultimate power in America is held only by a few public officials: the President, the senior members of the congressional establishment, the Supreme Court justices. The authority of the political leaders, however, is restricted in time: in the President's case, by his limited term of office; the power of the other key government officials is limited to their lives. For political power is individual; only in exceptional circumstances and then for limited periods of time is it transmissible within a family or to nonrelative heirs. On the other hand, it is the essence of big ownership that it may be inherited and even made to grow, with shrewd management.

That the Big Money retains its influence is a tale that needs continued retelling. It is equally important to remember that, even if we have not been able to redistribute wealth more equitably, our society has been manifoldly reconstructed since 1933 to provide greater job security and wider diffusion of the amenities of civilization. The political realignment that helped obtain these results relied upon new insights provided by Keynesian and welfare economics. A refocusing of economic thought is, in my opinion, a prerequisite to the attainment of greater distributive justice.

For a New Aesthetic

ARISTOTLE'S POETICS. *Translated by Leon Golden; commentary by O. B. Hardison, Jr. Prentice-Hall. $5.95.*

AESTHETICS IN THE MODERN WORLD. *Edited by Harold Osborne. Weybright and Talley. $10.*

ON QUALITY IN ART. *By Jakob Rosenberg. Princeton University Press. $10.*

Reviewed by DOUGLAS M. DAVIS

There is a sense in which aesthetics is a fit study for grown men and a sense in which it isn't, both amply demonstrated by these three books. They range enormously in coherence and usefulness, from a lucid new translation of Aristotle's *Poetics,* the rereading of which is in itself an aesthetic experience, to some devastating nonsense. Let us be thankful for the good that is here, that is in Aristotle and his careful, intelligent interpreter, O. B. Hardison, Jr., but, more important, let us be instructed by the bad. To what end? To the proper definition not alone of what aesthetics (and its handmaiden, criticism) can accomplish but what it can't.

It seems obvious, to begin with, that the last category is vast, however reluctant we all seem to admit the fact. Even so precise and careful an investigator as Aristotle himself bears out the point. The *Poetics* is a model of all that criticism can hope to be, indeed, all that criticism has become since the Renaissance. It grounds itself resolutely in the art it discusses, feeding upon that art for the examples that sustain the argument*; it distinguishes carefully between the kinds of phenomena examined, pointing out, for example, that the requirements of epic, comedy and tragedy are vastly different; and it bases its conclusions in a framework that is largely aesthetic. Aristotle is no early-day Clement Greenberg, to be sure. His concern for the social implications of art of all kinds is fully as deep as that of Plato, who ejected poets from his ideal republic, you will recall. The difference, which persists in society to this day, is simply that Aristotle welcomed art, even its negative, "antisocial" manifestations, believing it good for the body politic. An-

DOUGLAS M. DAVIS, art critic of the *National Observer* and contributing editor for *Art in America,* writes and lectures widely. He is working on a book about art and technology to be published by Praeger.

* It is no longer the fashion to regard Aristotle as an inductive thinker, of course, mainly because he proceeds, in the manner of Greek rhetoric, from generalization to specifics, rather than the reverse. This seems to me valid only if we apply the stiffest standards of pure science; criticism is far closer to art, however, and on that ground Aristotle's empiricism stands the inductive test quite well. Compared to Plato, to the medieval writers, to the Romantics, and even to many modern critics, he is the very model of the disciplined, "scientific" critic; there is no one, in my experience, who outdoes him for rigid adherence to aesthetic fact, save perhaps the Brooks-Ransom (old style) school, or Greenberg and his disciples in art criticism.

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chored by that belief, he, unlike Plato, could devote himself to aesthetic considerations without fear, even to the point of recommending tragedies with unhappy (and therefore immoral) endings.

But even this man, who taught us so much, who gave heart to the earliest attempts, in the Renaissance, to rid criticism of its extra-art obsessions, who provided the basis, in our own day, for the formalist critics in art and the New Critics in literature, seems hopelessly antiquarian *when read as an aesthetic guide.* Professor Hardison disagrees. Like many of his colleagues, he believes that Aristotle is aesthetically valid even now, that he wrote, not inductively for an age, but deductively, for all time. It is a difficult case to make, but Hardison makes it well (his entire commentary, in fact, so thorough, fair, patient, is a model of its kind). Only by closing his eyes, though. Aristotle wrote in a cultural context so different from ours that it takes a sentimentalist to ignore the gap. Dithyrambic and nomic poetry were central realities for him, as were comic and tragic masks. He believed in abstractions like goodness and evil, and the art that surrounded him was more than representational: it was idealistic. He said, "Whatever is larger . . . is always more beautiful." He recommended that tragedy not exceed, in dramatic time, one day, and found it natural for a few noble families to dominate its plots. He praised "linguistic adornment" in drama, considered plot more important than character, and called the episodic plot, in which events unfold illogically, the worst. Now I am not saying Aristotle is wrong; I am saying that any attempt to make him a "modern" thinker, in the sense that he anticipates contemporary practices in the arts, is silly. The merest acquaintance with contemporary drama alone, with the diction of O'Neill, say, or the "plot" in *Waiting for Godot,* dashes that.

No, the lesson to be learned from Aristotle is method, not precept, the necessity, in fine, of the empirical stance, of learning from what we see—or, as E. H. Gombrich says, "There is no such thing as art; there are only artists." Had the contributors to *Aesthetics in the Modern World* kept to that method they would come off sounding a good deal less antediluvian than they now do. Gregory Battcock once said, reversing the usual order, that we cannot hope to understand the art of the past unless we know that of the present. I thought the remark absurd at the time, but a good dose of Harold Osborne's book, edited from a series of papers presented before the British Society of Aesthetics, makes it sound a lot better.

For the papers demonstrate in case after case the most irrational, implacable hatred of contemporary art, a hatred that inevitably poisons their attempts to analyze and define the aesthetic experience (which is, after all, the main end of aesthetics, the end to which Aristotle wrote), because it omits almost fifty years of work, during which time, according to most historians, there has been more concern for and exploration into the arts than at any time in the past several centuries. One reads with surprise learned men making statements about the art of their own time that would discredit a high school classroom—to the effect, for example, that the novels of D. H. Lawrence are insalubrious and art nouveau indecent (J. N. Findlay), that frank descriptions of the sex act depersonalize it (R. Meager), that William Carlos Williams has "renounced all the pleasures of the English language" and the imagist movement is anti-intellectual (William Empson), that, finally, modern architecture must bear "the distinctive stamp of a work of art as opposed to a work of craft" (W. Sinclair Gauldie). But the crowning touch, the one that reveals the cast of mind behind this book most clearly, comes in a slip, so to speak, by L. R. Rogers:

> But the fact that art, whatever else it may be, has *something* to do with consciousness, and that artists *think,* and sometimes very hard, *in their own terms* is now widely accepted.
>
> (Italics both mine and the author's.)

And of course the vast majority of these essays reveal that hunger for standards so characteristic of Western critical discourse, a hunger directly related to Jakob Rosenberg's *Quality in Art.* Let me now pass

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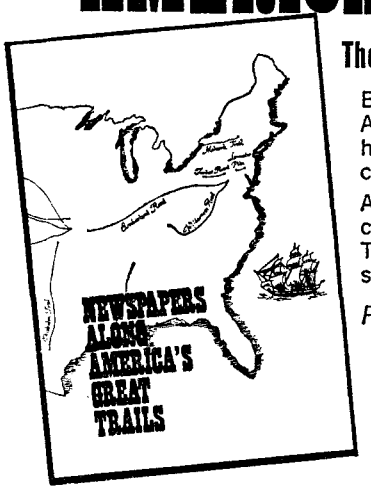

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on to this curious volume, returning again, later, to *Aesthetics in the Modern World,* which is by no means without interest or strength, of a kind. I wish I could say anything like that much for Mr. Rosenberg, for he is plainly, to paraphrase another rhetorician, well-intentioned. But the fact is, I am at a loss to define how bad it is; that such stuff gets by in our highest halls of art scholarship (these were the A. W. Mellon Lectures, delivered at the National Gallery of Art in 1964) defies belief. Perhaps William Empson is right, when he charges, in his own paper on aesthetics, that the convention in art criticism is to talk guff.

For it is the rhetoric that kills here, or should I say the diction. Much could be written about the man's style, organization and method, all lamentable, but let them pass, for now. It is Mr. Rosenberg's contention that we can derive certain objective standards from the visual arts by studying the drawings of the masters and abstracting those qualities that unite them. Just listen to what he concludes, prior to the twentieth century, mercifully excerpted:

Line and tone:
sensitivity, articulateness, flexibility, ease, surety, spontaneity, rhythmical quality, suggestiveness. . . .
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an articulate, continuous, and comprehensive treatment. . . .
Finally the following more general characteristics . . .
range of accents, artistic economy, selectiveness, feeling for the media, sense for the significant, consistency, vitality, originality, inventiveness, intensity, clarity, expressiveness.

There is but token recognition that one man's "sensitivity" may be another man's crudity, one man's "sense for the significant" another man's insignificance. It is difficult to imagine intelligent historians and critics sitting through this verbal naïveté with sober faces. But so they must have.

To what purpose? The establishment, of course, of standards, by which we can tell the good from the bad. Harold Osborne and Ruth Saw declare this in the opening essay of *Aesthetics in the Modern World,*

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one of the discipline's classic goals; the critic's task is conventionally supposed to involve such decisions as well. But Mr. Osborne and Miss Saw list a number of other valid topics for the aesthetician (How, for example, do we go about analyzing an artist's "intentions"? What is the role of pleasure in art?), all incomparably richer, more worthy a serious man's attention than the simple matter of good and bad; surely the critic can better occupy himself as well. I cannot myself get over the conviction, particularly after reading Jakob Rosenberg, that judging a work of art is the least interesting thing we can do with it. I need hardly add that the judgments of the past, even when delivered by an Aristotle or a Sam Johnson, have proven notoriously fallible; the fact is common knowledge, even in the universities.

Are we left then to drown in a sea of relativity? Well, it is a complicated subject, and I can only touch on one aspect of it here. The less obsessed we become with the problem of judgment, the more open we will be to aesthetic experience of all kinds, not just those that occur in a book or a museum. Judgment, particularly the definitive kind we seem to lust after, depends, after all, on the elevation of certain objects, values and experiences to the exclusion of others. G. P. Henderson, one of the British aestheticians, puts it very well, this way:

> The Model T Ford looked to have the qualities of endurance and plain-living uprightness in such defiance of all the graces as to be in a perverse way delightful. Engineering and architecture, in fact, readily suggest examples of this 'sophisticated' way of looking. There are occasions when we admire a building not because it is picturesque or awe-inspiring for its height, or made of some pleasing fabric, but because in some satisfactory way it looks what it is meant to be.

What Mr. Henderson touches and I propose is a widened aesthetic, one that would take in a great many more phenomena than we now, officially, allow. Such an aesthetic certainly does not rule out the analysis, comparison and definition of these phenomena, or indeed any intellectual activity, like those outlined by Mr. Osborne and Miss

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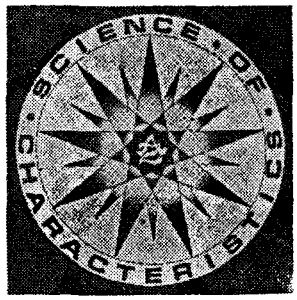

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Saw, that delights and exercises the mind. Still less does it imply any desertion of personal taste. It does defy those for whom art is primarily a corpus delicti, and, yes, it does presume profound social changes. But I am convinced the changes are coming, not, of course, through political agencies. In the most prophetic of the British essays, C. A. Mace posits a time when leisure values are in the ascendant and writes that, "In the state of civilization, life itself has become art." In such a time, of course, there is no other choice.

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THE ORGANIZATION OF INDUSTRY. *By George J. Stigler. Richard D. Irwin. $8.95.*
Reviewed by SHIRLEY B. JOHNSON

This recently published volume is a mixture of old, new and nearly new articles by George Stigler. One finds, as one would expect in this sort of collection, the pleasant experience of returning to old friends: the now classic treatments of the kinky oligopoly demand curve, and monopoly and oligopoly by merger. Although some of the material in this volume is well known to anyone who has been a graduate student of economics, most of it is probably new to the generally well-educated reader who is not an economist by trade. The book does contain some quite technically sophisticated sections, but there is enough that is generally available to the intelligent layman to make it worth his while to browse.

Stigler's writings might well be subtitled "The Joys of Doing Economics." He, more than any other contemporary American economist, dispels the gloom surrounding economic theory. It is impossible to confront the subject treated with such humor and verve and come away still believing that economics is the dismal science. Never does George Stigler play the heavy for long.

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There are those who think he is not serious enough, but in an all too tense and frantic world his style has the merit of being extremely imaginative and amusing, even mind-expanding.

The Organization of Industry is quite a different kind of thing from Galbraith's *The New Industrial State*. First, even though I maintain that Stigler's is a book for many people, it was clearly not written with such a wide audience in mind. It has no simple thesis, and Stigler is only a trifle polemical. His insights are subtle and require considerable pondering over by the reader. In this sense, his is a ponderous book. Second, a good part of the book is devoted to the behavior of individual firms under a variety of circumstances. There is still the presumption that much of this behavior is capable of analysis, assuming competitive instincts, if not completely competitive markets. The existence of a technostructure is not denied. This book is written at a different level of abstraction. Readers primarily concerned with problems of the structure of the American economy today and government policy implications, will probably find Part IV on antitrust policy the most interesting.

Stigler's treatment of antitrust policy attempts an evaluation of the effects of antitrust laws. Here the extensive work that he has done on measuring and explaining the degree of concentration in U.S. industry is used to support the hypothesis that the Sherman Act has been a modest deterrent to high concentration. Stigler's empirical tests are suggestive and supportive of this hypothesis, rather than conclusive. Much of the value of his work is that it breaks the ground for further research, none of which will of course be completely "conclusive," since no statistical tests ever are.

It is in the treatment of mergers in Chapter 22, written in 1955 but still relevant, that Stigler provides some rules for efficient functioning of Section 7 of the Clayton Act. This chapter is probably the most important one in the section on antitrust. On page 305, there is a clear statement, for once not hedged with the usual Stiglerian qualifications:

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The antimerger statute, it is evident, is the fundamental element of our preventive antitrust policy. It seems a conservative estimate that fully one half of the major cases which have been brought under the Sherman Act have been necessary simply because we did not have an effective antimerger policy in the past. The antitrust agencies should take this lesson to heart; the new statute deserves a place of high priority in the antitrust policy of the United States.

The final section of *The Organization of Industry,* which follows the material on antitrust, is a vintage article placed for some peculiar reason in the Appendix; "Monopolistic Competition in Retrospect" is one of Stigler's classics. Itself a review of the books on monopolistic competition by Chamberlin and Triffin, it is also a statement of Stigler's estimate of "the net contribution of the attempt to construct a theory of monopolistic competition" and, perhaps of even greater importance, a presentation of Stigler's credo about the role of economic analysis.

This piece provides a good deal of help in interpreting the kinds of statements found earlier in the book. The short piece on block booking is a case in point. It may seem fanciful or unrealistic unless understood in the context of Stigler's approach to economics summarized on page 319:

> The purpose of the study of economics is to permit us to make predictions about the behavior of economic phenomena under specified conditions. The sole test of the usefulness of an economic theory is the concordance between its predictions and the observable course of events. Often a theory is criticized or rejected because its assumptions are "unrealistic." Granting for a moment that this charge has meaning, it burdens theory with an additional function, that of description. This is a most unreasonable burden to place upon a theory: the role of description is to particularize, while the role of theory is to generalize—to disregard an infinite number of differences and capture the important common element in different phenomena.

For this reason, it would be wise for the reader to look at the Appendix before attempting Parts II to IV. He will either be put off or put into the correct frame of mind to comprehend and enjoy what follows. This is a risk worth taking.

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The Reader Replies

THE READER REPLIES *carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles that have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20009. Because of space limitations we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.*

—EDITOR

I would like to thank you for the tremendous help the Summer 1968 issue gave me in selecting my summer reading.

It was not, however, the "Recommended Summer Reading" that I wish to compliment your journal on. This section, by the way, could most profitably be read as a piece of dramatized group therapy. Each of the participants pours out his psyche under the guise of "my favorite books," with the dramatic interest coming in guessing which of the players will be next to recommend *The Confessions of Nat Turner.* The climax arrives when patient (noun, though the adjective makes a good pun) Alice Walker delivers her put-down of the book. The denouement embarrassedly falls away, with C. Vann Woodward still mightily clinging to the group consensus.

It was, rather, John Herman Randall, Jr.'s REAPPRAISAL of Plato that directed my summer reading. For some reason, I have successfully escaped the Greek philosophers in my five years of college, except for the years when I illicitly helped freshman composition students write *something*—anything at all—on the subject of that incubus *The Question of Socrates.* This was enough to convince me that those ancients had nothing that could be read for pleasure. Not "enlargement of the mind," please, but "pleasure."

Then Mr. Randall happened along. Mercifully, he was short and to the point. Or, rather, concise. (That kind of trick never failed to bring my freshman patrons' grade up from a C+ to a B—.) Then, too, he was iconoclastic. (Another good trick. Even if it doesn't bring your grade up, it will establish you in your teacher's mind as a "creative person," an impression that may later be harvested as a few brownie points in your favor.)

But, most of all, he was—sorry if this sounds familiar—seductive. He made Plato live. One, by showing his human side in the Faguet quote, and two, by giving us a most entertaining book report on the *Symposium.* Having thus snared us in his vision, Randall continues to call for his reinterpretation of Plato and the Platonists. Although, if I may say so, who cares by this time? What we want to do is not to sit reading one man's opinion, but to hop down to the bookstore (the Student Union Bookstore, that is—remember they give rebate slips on their books), buy a copy of Plato (in paperback—it's cheaper that way), forget about that assignment for Musical Cultures of the World, and sit somewhere conducive to good thought (like at home with the Doors blaring out at 120 db), and simply "groove on Plato."

Pretty sneaky of you to slip this in under REAPPRAISALS, instead of where it should go. But then, how knowing of you, for Randall's piece would destroy the dramatic continuity of "Recommended Summer Reading."

Curiously enough, in preparing this letter I had a dream myself the night before. I dreamed I saw a swan, eluding his pursuers and pouring forth his voice in song. John Randall was in my dream, too. He exclaimed, "O Swan, I can understand your song." Whereupon that swan flew down and perched on his shoulder. Then the swan said, "Seduce," and flew away.

Sorry, but I will *not* blame *this* dream on Apollo!

MICHAEL O'BRIEN
Los Angeles, California

* * *

I note that your quite limited THE READER REPLIES makes it impossible for the average, not-learned, reader to obtain any impression about other readers' reactions to your publication. Perhaps that is as it ought to be; I, for one, regret this state of affairs.

I would, for instance, like to know whether your auditorium shares Mr. Hofstadter's opinions about the definition and purpose of the University, especially since the author of the

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THE BIOGRAPHY OF ALDOUS HUXLEY

Sybille Bedford, who has been invited by Alfred A. Knopf and Harper & Row to write the official biography of the late Aldous Huxley, would appreciate hearing from any readers who knew Mr. Huxley personally, or who had dealings of any kind with him, or who may have documents that would be of assistance to her. You may reach Mrs. Bedford through Alfred A. Knopf, Publishers, 501 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. Any documents sent to Knopf will be copied and returned at once.

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete. Dorothy B. Kerr

Commencement Address scarcely mentions the University's obligation to teach, an obligation which in the past decades has, it seems, lost more and more of its former importance. I wonder who Mr. Hofstadter does call in case of sickness in his family—a medical researcher? How about letting him answer the question?

RUDOLPH J. KENT, M.D.
Bonham, Texas

* * *

As a graduate student on a President's Scholarship at Columbia University, I learned to share the respect for and devotion to the "great" and "ancient" seat of learning which Professor Hofstadter expresses in his Commencement Address in the Autumn issue. In commenting on the campus riots last summer he admits that the story behind them is not yet finished. He fails to mention the main problem lying behind Columbia's management. It seems to be a subject one doesn't talk about. This subject, quite bluntly, is: who owns the university, who pays its heaviest expenses, who pays the professor's salary?

Student discontent on the Columbia campus, as on many another private college campus, springs from the basic dilemma: how to accept support from sources of great wealth and remain free? Do Columbia's bills payable jeopardize its motto, *In litteris libertas?*

Professor Hofstadter wants students to have influence but not power. Who is to have the power? Who has it now? Does Wall Street with its sponsoring gifts and interlocking directorates possess the real power? Is this the unfinished story to which the professor refers? Professor Hofstadter discusses it in his books. Why not in a Commencement Address? The leaders among the revolting students understand and discuss it and these discussions are largely eliminated from our news.

In reading about the riots one wonders if the leaders have a plan for managing the finances of their school any better than those now in charge of it. The young insurgents captured and camped in the President's office. Did they read the documents they found there? Perhaps the young bolsheviks should have been left in that office and asked to run the university for a spell. Such an adventure might well have been for them and the public and education generally a laboratory lesson transcending in value all others.

THOMAS H. UZZELL
LaJolla, California

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